THE AIR FORCE WARRIOR:

INSTITUTIONAL RHETORIC VERSUS REALITY

BY

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APPROVAL

The undersigned certify that this thesis meets master's-level standards of research, argumentation, and expression.

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DISCLAIMER

The conclusions and opinions expressed in this document are those of the author. They do not reflect the official position of the US Government, Department of Defense, the United States Air Force, or Air University.

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ABSTRACT

The Air Force continues to transition to an enhanced capability for "remote war," driving the operator farther and farther from the battlefield, thereby greatly reducing exposure to physical danger. Concurrently, this movement to remote applications of force also affects the perception of who is a warrior, both within the Air Force and among sister services who continue to face danger on the battlefield. Unlike the sister services, particularly the Army and the Marines, in which a majority of the force trains for the specific task or purpose of physically engaging with the enemy, the majority of the Air Force is trained for the task or purpose of providing support to a relatively small number of combat Airmen. How Airmen perceive themselves and the Air Force directly affects the Air Force as an institution. If the perception within the Air Force is dramatically skewed from the perception outside the Air Force, credibility and influence diminish. Only by honestly assessing service capabilities, attitudes, and personnel requirements to accomplish the mission can the Air Force ensure that institutional rhetoric matches modern day reality.

Defining the warrior and articulating a warrior ethos for a service as technologically adept as the Air Force is a daunting challenge. The current institutional description of the Air Force warrior is an all-inclusive "every Airman is a warrior," and an Airman is issued "warrior" credentials by simply reciting either the oath of enlistment or the oath of office. This notion that every Airman is a warrior is further codified in the Airman's Creed. One cannot deny all Airmen are essential for the Air Force to perform its wartime tasks, but does this qualify every Airman as a warrior? This thesis appraises the Air Force warrior through evaluating historic traditions of the warrior, the impact of technology, the moral forces in war—particularly danger, fear, and courage—and through assessing current Air Force Doctrine, enlisted and officer curriculum, and the Airman's Creed. Synthesizing historical and theoretical information yields a new, more appropriate definition of an Air Force warrior and provides a basis to discuss the intra-service and inter-service ramifications of Airmen identity. Although every Airman is necessary to complete the Air Force mission, not every Airman is a warrior. An intellectually honest appraisal of the Air Force's techno-centric mission and culture demonstrates this truth; accepting it will enhance the institutional power and credibility of the Air Force.

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Introduction

I have only two men out of my company and 20 out of some other company. We need support, but it is almost suicide to try to get it here as we are swept by machine gun fire and a constant barrage is on us. I have no one on my left and only a few on my right. I will hold.

- 1Lt Clifton B. Cates, USMC, in Belleau Wood, Age 19

With engine failure, impending link failure, and a limited visual picture… the situation was tense. "This emergency felt no different than any airplane, the same emotions were there."

-Capt Greg Harbin, after receiving Air Force Aerial Achievement Medal for safely landing a UAV after its engine seized

Recently, the Air Force had its ego bruised by none other than the commander of U.S. Central Command, General David Petraeus, while speaking at a Marine Corps Association Foundation dinner. During the speech, General Petraeus took the opportunity to engage in the customary tradition of mocking sister services. To that end, General Petraeus delivered the following joke:

> *The marines' sense of toughness permeates the Corps' lore as well as its reality. To recall an illustrative story, a soldier is trudging through the muck in the midst of a downpour with a 60-pound rucksack on his back. This is tough, he thinks to himself. Just ahead of him trudges an Army ranger with an 80-pound pack on his back. This is really tough, he thinks. And ahead of him is a Marine with a 90-pound pack on, and he thinks to himself, I love how tough this is. [laughter, applause] Then, of course, 30,000 feet above them — [laughter] — 30,000 feet above them an Air Force pilot flips aside his ponytail. [laughter, applause] Now — I'm sorry. I don't know how that got in there — [laughter] — I know they haven't had ponytails in a year or two — [laughter] — and looks down at them through his cockpit as he flies over. Boy, he radios his wingman, it must be tough down there. [laughter] Well, TV commercials and all joking aside, we've all seen that marines truly and consistently live up to their reputation.*[1]

[1]Air Force Association, "Beyond Outrageous," *Air Force Magazine*, online edition, Aug 19, 2009, http://www.airforce-magazine.com/Features/airpower/Pages/box082009petraeus.aspx. (accessed Dec 7, 2009).

The reaction by Air Force partisans to this banter was over-the-top. The Air Force Association responded by penning an article titled "Beyond Outrageous." Despite noting that earlier in his remarks the General heaped praise on all the services for their joint war-fighting efforts, the article states, "However, those words do not alleviate the offensiveness—and un-jointness—of his later comments. They are symptomatic of the long-held belief of many ground commanders that airpower is no longer, if it ever was, relevant."[2] The negative reaction to the joke extended into the active Air Force as well. The joke caused such an underpinning of resentment and anger that General Petraeus even called General Schwartz, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, to apologize.[3]

Within this joke lay inherent perceptions of not only the Air Force, but of the Army and Marines as well. The military, throughout history, places great emphasis on honor, courage, work ethic, and the capability to perform difficult physical tasks. Without a doubt, the perception that the Army and the Marines perform arduous physical tasks with great courage is not in question. However, "a service that consists of guys sitting in cubicles playing video games is going to have trouble holding its head high amidst a warrior ethos."[4]

Considering the widely hysterical reaction to the anecdote that Petraeus did recite, imagine the apoplectic reaction if the joke ended in the following manner:

> *…Then, of course, a couple of thousand miles away, in an air-conditioned trailer with a hot cup of coffee and a Subway sandwich, sits an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) operator. Intently watching the Soldier, Ranger, and the Marine as they trudge through the muck on his "TV screen," he thinks to himself, boy that looks tough. Pulling another long shift, he realizes, disappointedly, that he will not make it home in time to see his daughter's soccer game. He informs the sensor analyst sitting next to him about missing the game. The sensor analyst responds, sorry dude, that's tough.*

The imaginary anecdote provided by General Petraeus is not new; it has been told often throughout the relatively short history of the Air Force. With the exception of the

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[2] Air Force Association, "Beyond Outrageous," *Air Force Magazine*, Aug 19, 2009.
[3] Bruce Rolfson, "No Joke: Petraeus Apologizes to Schwartz," *Air Force Times*, Sep 1, 2009, http://www.airforcetimes.com/news/2009/08/airforce_petraeus_joke_082809w/, (accessed Dec 7, 2009).
[4] Matthew Yglesias, "The Coming Air Force Crisis," *Think Progress*, Aug 26, 2009, http://yglesias.thinkprogress.org/archives/2009/08/the-coming-air-force-crisis.php (accessed Dec 7, 2009).

ponytail, the basic details of the joke are not the problem. It is true that the Air Force flies above the battlefield and employs ordnance. Indeed, the vast majority of Air Force occupations do not require the physical stamina and strength required of the Army and Marines. Though some Airmen do lug around rucksacks, carry weapons, and directly engage the enemy as part of their Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC), an overwhelming number do not. These details, however, are not the issue. The General's joke draws the ire of many in the Air Force because as the youngest service, the Air Force often feels it does not get the credit it deserves for its efforts in the joint fight.[5] Instead, there is a latent sensitivity and insecurity within many Airmen when compared to their joint brethren. Such comparisons consistently challenge the self-proclaimed warrior status of Airmen.

The Air Force View

The perception of who are warriors and their associated qualities and attributes has morphed through the centuries. The concept of 'the warrior' has grown from its battlefield foundation, becoming a concept and "catch phrase in the fields of psychology, philosophy, literature, business, and in the movies. …One can be a fighting warrior, a gentle warrior, a warrior athlete, a road warrior, a gay warrior, a Wall Street warrior, a woman warrior, a new warrior, an earth warrior, a warrior monk, an executive warrior, a dream warrior, or an ultimate warrior."[6] Each new additive metaphor dilutes the true meaning and definition of the warrior and associated traits and characteristics.

As a service that is often considered the most technologically adept and the least physically demanding, the Air Force must continually battle the perception that it is not a force of warriors. To that end, the Air Force strives to foster a "warrior ethos" within its ranks. This emphasis coincides with an effort to develop the desired character, core values, and professionalism within the Air Force. Indeed, this should be the foundation of military training for all Airmen. Instruction on the Airman's Creed, the Code of Conduct, and professional ethics and standards inculcates Airmen. While the emphasis

[5] Mark Thompson, "Petraeus Zinger Wounds Air Force Egos," *Time*, Aug 21, 2009, http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1917841,00.html, (accessed Dec 7, 2009).
[6] Robert Heckler, *In Search of the Warrior Spirit*, California: North Atlantic Books, 1990, 245.

on a warrior ethic is a way to enhance the pride of Airmen, it is also a method for the Air Force to claim parity with the other services in terms of warrior status.

The institutional character of the Air Force changes as technology develops. Its identity is perpetually merged with the advancement of technology. The technological achievement of the aircraft fostered the development of an independent Air Force, and aircraft, along with spacecraft and other emergent technologies, are continual expressions of technological achievement that provides service confirmation.[7] As technology improves, the Air Force continues to transition to an enhanced capability for "remote war," driving the operator farther and farther from the battlefield, greatly reducing exposure to physical danger. Concurrently, this movement to remote applications of force also affects the perception of who is a warrior, both within the Air Force and among sister services whose members continue to face danger on the battlefield.

The warrior ethos the Air Force desires to foster is based not only on what the Air Force currently brings to the fight but is also rooted in the heritage of the past.[8] Part of this program was the creation of the Airman's Creed.[9]

The Airman's Creed
I am an American Airman.
I am a Warrior.
I have answered my Nation's call.
I am an American Airman.
My mission is to Fly, Fight, and Win.
I am faithful to a Proud Heritage,
A Tradition of Honor,
And a Legacy of Valor.
I am an American Airman.
Guardian of Freedom and Justice,
My Nation's Sword and Shield,
Its Sentry and Avenger.
I defend my Country with my Life.
I am an American Airman.
Wingman, Leader, Warrior.
I will never leave an Airman behind,
I will never falter,

[7] Carl H. Builder, *The Masks of War: American Military styles in Strategy and Analysis*, The RAND Corporation, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989, 19.
[8] MSgt Mitch Gettle, "Air Force Fosters "Warrior Ethos" in all Airmen." *Air Force Print News*, 21 March 2007, http://www.af.mil/news/story_print.asp?id=123045702, (accessed Dec 7, 2009).
[9] SrA Troy Davis, "CMSAF Introduces, Defines Warrior Ethos," *Air Force Print News*, 10 April 2007, http://www.af.mil/news/story_print.asp?id=123048232, (accessed Dec 7, 2009).

And I will not fail.[10]

The second sentence of the Airman's Creed, "I am a Warrior," lies at the heart of the issue.

The difficulty in differentiating between having a warrior ethos and being an actual warrior within the Air Force is a sensitive topic. Historically, society and the Air Force raise the status of the combat aviator, the presumed Air Force warrior, above that of the support services, yielding the distinct impression of inferiority among the support troops. Their relative lack of leadership opportunities within the Air Force confirms this impression. This tension between the war fighter and support personnel permeates the short history of the Air Force. Unlike sister services, in which a majority of the force trains for the specific task or purpose of physically engaging with the enemy, the majority of the Air Force is trained for the task or purpose of providing support to a relatively small number of combat Airmen.

Defining the warrior and articulating a warrior ethos for a service as technologically diverse as the Air Force is a daunting challenge. There is no doubt that the perception of the warrior is different in each service; considering the mediums in which they fight and the missions they perform, this is expected. All occupations within the Air Force are essential to the completion of the Air Force mission statement to "Fly, Fight, and Win in Air, Space, and Cyberspace."[11] One cannot deny all Airmen are essential for the Air Force to perform its wartime tasks, but does this make all Airmen warriors? This thesis will attempt to define the Air Force warrior and answers the questions: Are all Airmen warriors, and does it matter?

Sister Service Creeds and Ethoi

To be sure, the USAF is not alone in fostering a warrior ethos within its ranks. Each of the armed services teaches and promotes its own creed and ethos. The US Navy, the service most akin to the Air Force in terms of reliance on technology and relative separation from the battlefield for most of its members, espouses the following creed:

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[10] Official US Air Force Website, *Airman's Creed*, http://www.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-070418-013.pdf, (accessed Dec 7, 2009).

[11] MSgt Mitch Gettle, "Air Force Releases New Mission Statement," *Air Force Print News,* 8 Dec 2005, http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?storyID=123013440, (accessed Dec 21, 2009).

The Sailor's Creed

I am a United States Sailor.
I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America
and I will obey the orders of those appointed over me.
I represent the fighting spirit of the Navy and those who have gone before
me to defend freedom and democracy around the world.
I proudly serve my country's Navy combat team
with Honor, Courage and Commitment.
I am committed to excellence and the fair treatment of all.[12]

A complementary Navy Ethos states principles that distinguish the military and civilian personnel who serve on the Navy team.[13] It is interesting to note that the Navy Ethos was formerly a 'warrior ethos' until the Chief of Naval Operations changed the guidance in 2009. This change was due to the significant contribution of Navy civilians to the mission. The modern Navy Ethos is designed to encapsulate the entire "spectrum of activities of Sailors and civilians, moving beyond the narrow focus of the Warrior Ethos and expanding it to the broader umbrella of all who serve the United States Navy, regardless of background, personal experience, or position."[14] The US Navy is trying to emphasize to the sailor and the entire US Navy establishment the worth of US Navy Core Values: honor, courage, and commitment to lead the way.

The service that symbolizes the preeminent image of warriors is the United States Marine Corps. Even their commercial slogan of "The few, the proud, the Marines" and their motto *Semper Fidelis* (always faithful) exhibits the aura of an elite group of warriors. The Marines' form of training, particularly for their officers, is dramatically

[12] Official Website of the United States Navy, The Sailor's Creed, http://www.navy.mil/navydata/navy_legacy_hr.asp?id=257, (accessed Dec 7, 2009).
[13] Official Website of the United States Navy, Navy Ethos Frequently Asked Questions, http://www.navy.mil/features/ethos/faq.html, (accessed Dec 7, 2009). The Navy ethos is "We are the United States Navy, our nation's sea power – ready guardians of peace, victorious in war. We are professional Sailors and civilians – a diverse and agile force exemplifying the highest standards of service to our nation, at home and abroad, at sea and ashore. Integrity is the foundation of our conduct; respect for others is fundamental to our character; decisive leadership is crucial to our success. We are a team, disciplined and well-prepared, committed to mission accomplishment. We do not waver in our dedication and accountability to our Shipmates and families. We are patriots, forged by the Navy's core values of Honor, Courage and Commitment. In times of war and peace, our actions reflect our proud heritage and tradition. We defend our nation and prevail in the face of adversity with strength, determination, and dignity. We are the United States Navy." Found on the Official US Navy Website at http://www.navy.mil/features/ethos/navy_ethos2.html.
[14] Official Website of the United States Navy, Navy Ethos Frequently Asked Questions.

different from the other services. Every Marine Officer goes through the Corp's 6-month school named 'The Basic School'. This school ensures every officer understands the entirety of the Marine Corps, develops leadership skills, instills pride in the Marine legacy, and gains the tactical knowledge needed to earn the respect of fellow Marines.[15] Disregarding the future occupation of each Marine officer, the training received at The Basic School emphasizes the role of an infantry platoon commander, thereby reinforcing the notion that each Marine is first, and foremost, a rifleman.

The Creed most associated with the Marine Corps is the Marine Corps Rifleman's Creed.

Marine Corps Rifleman's Creed

This is my rifle.
There are many like it, but this one is mine.
It is my life.
I must master it as I must master my life.
Without me my rifle is useless. Without my rifle, I am useless.
I must fire my rifle true.
I must shoot straighter than the enemy who is trying to kill me.
I must shoot him before he shoots me. I will.
My rifle and I know that what counts in war is not the rounds we fire, the noise of our burst, or the smoke we make.
We know that it is the hits that count. We will hit.
My rifle is human, even as I am human, because it is my life.
Thus, I will learn it as a brother.
I will learn its weaknesses, its strengths, its parts, its accessories, its sights and its barrel.
I will keep my rifle clean and ready, even as I am clean and ready.
We will become part of each other.
Before God I swear this creed.
My rifle and I are the defenders of my country.
We are the masters of our enemy.
We are the saviors of my life.
So be it, until victory is America's and there is no enemy.[16]

The Marine Corps Values of honor, courage, and commitment define the Marine's character. It is significant to note that the Marine Corps Values are the same as the US

[15] Official USMC Website, Marine Officer, The Basic School, http://officer.marines.com/marine/making_marine_officers/basic_school, (accessed Dec 21, 2009).
[16] Heritage Press International, Marine Corps Heritage, *USMC Rifleman's Creed*, http://www.usmcpress.com/heritage/marine_corps_rifleman's_creed.htm, (accessed Dec 7, 2009).

Navy Core Values, thus reinforcing the historic bond between the two services. To a Marine, the greatest title is not that of a warrior or soldier. Rather the title of 'Marine' provides the utmost personal honor and pride. This honor of being a Marine is also buttressed by the oft heard phrase—once a Marine, always a Marine.

The US Army, with its manpower-intensive missions and service, has the most daunting training task to develop young men and women into soldiers. To aid this endeavor, the Army created the Soldier's Creed.

The Soldier's Creed

I am an American Soldier.
I am a Warrior and a member of a team.
I serve the people of the United States and live the Army Values.
I will always place the mission first.
I will never accept defeat.
I will never quit.
I will never leave a fallen comrade.
I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough,
trained and proficient in my warrior tasks and drills.
I always maintain my arms, my equipment and myself.
I am an expert and I am a professional.
I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy the enemies of the
United States of America in close combat.
I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.
I am an American Soldier.[17]

The Soldier's Creed is where the Army derives its Warrior Ethos—delineated by the Army as the underlined section. The warrior ethos defines the characteristics required to be a Soldier – "a Soldier committed to and prepared to close with and kill or capture the enemy."[18] To demonstrate the seriousness of the warrior ethos to the US Army, in August 2006 the United States Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, Infantry Forces Research Unit, funded a study by the Wexford Group International to explore the concept of warrior ethos. It confirmed the warrior ethos

[17] Gerald Klein, Margaret Salter, Gary Riccio, and Randall Sullivan, *Enhancing Warrior Ethos in Soldier Training: The Teamwork Development Course*, The Wexford Group International, Research Product 2006-12, Infantry Forces Research Unit, United States Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, Aug 2006, 1.
[18] Official US Army Website, Fort Benning, *Warrior Ethos*, https://www.infantry.army.mil/bolc/content/KeysToSuccess/12_warrior_ethos.htm, (accessed Dec 7, 2009).

tenets as found in the Soldier's Creed and designed a program to facilitate its application for Soldiers during initial training and throughout their military careers.

A service approaches the training of its members in various ways, each according to its own traditions and the set of skills and techniques it brings to the joint fight. That these methods are significantly different should surprise no one and should be encouraged. It is through these varying prisms and institutional characters that each service establishes its culture.

Organization

To define the Air Force warrior, this study proceeds in a step-by-step fashion. The first chapter provides a foundation by examining warriors and the warrior ethos throughout western history and the impact of technology on the historic warrior. Advancing from the historical underpinning, the next chapter examines how military theorists describe the moral forces in war—particularly danger, fear, and courage—and their application to the concept of a warrior. In addition, the chapter examines these moral forces through the lens of advanced technology and remote war in order to differentiate the professed definition of today's Air Force warrior as compared to his (or her) predecessors.

The third chapter details the history of the perceived Air Force warrior. Writings from the history of combat, air power theorists, and Air Force Doctrine Documents provide an appropriate underpinning. Furthermore, this portion of the thesis examines the current Air Force warrior ethos and the characterization of who is an Air Force warrior by analyzing the Basic Military Training (BMT), United States Air Force Academy (USAFA), Officer Training School (OTS), Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), and the Air and Space Basic Course (ASBC) curricula.

The fourth chapter synthesizes the history of the warrior ethic with modern practice and identity to provide a new definition of an Air Force warrior and assess the intra-service and inter-service ramifications. The implication of the perceptions of the Air Force warrior and associated warrior ethos, and why it matters, is provided via a discussion of the impact on morale, esteem, institutional relevance, credibility, and

power. The thesis concludes with recommendations to the Air Force about how to enhance institutional credibility.

How Airmen perceive themselves and the Air Force directly affects the Air Force as an institution. If the perception within the Air Force is dramatically skewed from the perception outside the Air Force, credibility and influence will diminish. Only by honestly assessing service capabilities, attitudes, and personnel requirements to accomplish the mission can Air Force credibility and power thrive.

Chapter 1

Warriors and the Warrior Ethos Throughout History

Out of every 100 men, ten shouldn't even be there, eighty are just targets, nine are the real fighters, and we are lucky to have them, for they make the battle. Ah, but the one, one is a warrior, and he will bring the others back.

- Heraclitus

The Warrior

History is replete with tales of war and conquest. From the earliest recorded times to the present day, history is shaped in large part by its warriors. Whether the campaigns of the Greek armies, ancient battles that created or destroyed empires, the Thirty Years' War that yielded the Peace of Westphalia and the nation-state, the epic battles of World Wars I and II, the Cold War, or the battles of the current day, warriors achieved varying political purposes to include conquest, defense, intimidation, and rectification. Who are the warriors of the past and how does their image affect the way we view warriors today? To initiate the examination of the warrior and the warrior ethos, this chapter explores the concept of the warrior throughout history.

One observer claims, "The warrior is by definition a fighter, a man or woman of action, a specialist in meeting and resolving conflict and challenge."[1] Nevertheless, each society perceives its warriors in a different light. "In most societies, warriors have taken this role quite literally. They seek out battle, fighting is what gives meaning to their lives."[2] Other societies, rather than seeking armed conflict at the outset, view fighting as a method of last resort after attempting all other peaceful options. However, no matter which type of society is examined when conflict is initiated, the true warrior is historically the fighter. Throughout history, the warriors are the ones who take up arms and engage in conflict to fight for their clan, tribe, or nation. Warriors prepare and train for combat and, when sent to battle, warriors "are given a mandate by society to take

[1] Rick Fields, *The Code of the Warrior: In History, Myth, and Everyday Life*, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1991, 2-3.
[2] Fields, *The Code of the Warrior: In History, Myth, and Everyday Life*, 3.

lives."[3] Despite this mandate, society expects the warrior to take lives only within a given framework and context, and only for certain reasons. Regardless of various societal traditions, one of the common themes among all societies is that the warrior is "an essential part of society, a protector and a source of good."[4] However, warriors are ultimately defined through a relationship with death, both the enemy's and their own. Warriors are prepared to die at the hands of the enemy, yet their sacrifice must mean something.[5]

Every society and its leaders have a responsibility to understand the price that the warrior is willing to pay. They intentionally send warriors into harm's way, possibly to their death. Warriors must not simply be a means to a political end, for they are citizens of the nation and human beings as well. Their value must not be limited to the service that they provide to the nation or society. "Warriors are not mere tools; they are complex, sentient beings with fears, loves, hopes, dreams, talents, and ambitions—all of which may soon be snuffed out by a bomb, bullet, or bayonet….Those who send them off to war must make an effort to ensure that the warriors themselves fully understand the purpose of, and need for, their sacrifice."[6] This humanity inherent in the warrior mandates that society not reduce its perception of the warrior to a mindless, state-sanctioned killer.

Due to the immense responsibilities given to warriors—the ability to take life on behalf of a society—warriors must restrain their actions. One reason for this is to protect the warrior's psychological health. The acts a warrior must perform on the behalf of tribe, clan, nation, or coalition are not pleasant. The taking of human life is neither clean nor without trauma, and the fear that their own lives may be taken adds to the toll. "The combination of the warriors' own natural disgust at what they must witness in battle and the fact that what they must do to endure and conquer can seem so uncivilized, so against what they have been taught by their society, creates the conditions for even the most

[3] Shannon E. French, *The Code of the Warrior: Exploring Warrior Values Past and Present*, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003, 3.
[4] Fields, *The Code of the Warrior*, 3.
[5] Christopher Coker, *The Warrior Ethos: Military Culture and the War on Terror*, New York: Routledge, 2007, 5-8.
[6] French, *The Code of the Warrior: Exploring Warrior Values Past and Present*, *10.*

accomplished warriors to feel tremendous self-loathing."[7] Warriors also need a way to distinguish their actions and associated sense of duty, and subsequently understand how that differentiates them from the serial killer. The warrior occupation and its ability to invoke and assert power provides greater opportunity for moral corruption; warriors risk losing their humanity if they lose sight of the moral significance of their actions. Therefore, it is incumbent upon warriors to perform their duties in such a manner as to not be reviled and rejected be their society, but rather receive honor for their principled execution of a most difficult task.[8]

Every society brings a varying array of societal norms and ethical standards. However, the warrior must rise above the ever evolving, and sometimes decaying, set of moral values that guide society writ large. This is what Dr. James Toner aptly refers to as *gallant atavism*. *Gallant* suggests something that is noble, valiant, brave, and heroic that is not only shown in combat, but always—whether in or out of uniform. The term *atavism* originates from biology and suggests a reappearance of characteristics from remote ancestors that have been absent in intervening generations.[9] In times where the prevailing belief among the society is that there is no common good, no absolute right or wrong, where individual satisfaction is the preeminent goal, and moral decline is matched only by materialistic ambition, the military ethic of the warrior must not waver. "The military ethic can and must serve as a source of moral refreshment in an age which so often finds that military ethic… to be [an] object of ridicule, for the gallantry of your profession…[is] not understandable in the crack houses, among the impoverished, or among the lifestyles of the rich and famous…. The profession of arms is one of the very few institutions that can remind us of those values which impart noble purpose to life."[10]

Military might is required because of human weakness, not strength. Human failings and fear cause conflict. Combining this weakness with the inability to predict the course of events during conflict, the military man is often skeptical of human foresight

[7] French, *The Code of the Warrior: Exploring Warrior Values Past and Present, 4.*
[8] French, *The Code of the Warrior: Exploring Warrior Values Past and Present, 5.*
[9] Dr. James H. Toner, "Gallant Atavism: the Military Ethic in an Age of Nihilism," *Airpower Journal*, Vol X, no. 2, Summer 1996, 15.
[10] Toner, "Gallant Atavism," 16.

and control.[11] "The military view of man is thus decidedly pessimistic. Man has elements of goodness, strength, and reason, but he is also evil, weak, and irrational."[12] The moral frailty of man, combined with the moral relativism of society, mandates the warrior adhere to a warrior ethos.

The Warrior Ethos

One cannot discuss the warrior without interweaving the warrior ethos, for the one is incomplete without the other. The warrior is more than just an individual; that is only the starting point. The ethic to which warriors adhere molds and shapes the individual warrior and defines the warrior character. While having the ethos does not make one a warrior, there is no warrior without the warrior ethos.

In most societies, the warrior ethic, or code of honor, often holds the warrior to a higher ethical standard than the citizenry that the warrior defends. This code is neither imposed nor policed by the outside; rather, the warriors oversee themselves as a group and demand strict adherence to standards. This code not only defines how warriors interact with one another or their own society, but how they treat enemy soldiers and the enemy society as well. The code defines the boundaries of behavior, restrains the warrior, and differentiates honorable acts from contemptible deeds.[13] This code, or ethic, is what distinguishes warriors from mercenaries.[14]

The foundation of this ethical tradition appears in ancient Greece through the writings and teachings of Plato and Aristotle. The sophists, Greek lecturers and professors, launched an attack on the existing codes of morality. The sophist argument maintained that moral codes are not grounded in any truth, but instead are conventional human creations. However, the western tradition tends to agree more with Plato in that proper conduct is not a function of raw power or conventional views; rather, right behavior is somehow rooted in the nature of things. According to Plato, by behaving ethically one comports to a standard that "leads to a harmony of the soul and of

[11] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations,* Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1957, 62-64.
[12] Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, 63.
[13] French, *The Code of the Warrior: Exploring Warrior Values Past and Present, 3-4.*
[14] Fields, *The Code of the Warrior*, 3.

society."[15] In Plato's division of the soul, the warrior class is blessed with *thymos*, the spirit, and is related to the Aristotelian virtue of courage. "The warriors will mount a courageous defense of their city, and their courage will be elevated and sustained by a spirit of love of what is theirs. Part of their spiritedness will take the form of righteous indignation toward those who would destroy what they hold most dear—their laws, their mores, their morality, …The enemy attacks not just the nation, as it were, but the warrior, on a very personal level. By defending the political order, the warrior defends himself"."[16]

Aristotle also interweaves the notion of social well-being to that of individual moral virtue. In his teachings, he asserts that the realm of politics provides the conditions, particularly through education, necessary for humans to achieve happiness. In addition, happiness is the ultimate purpose of life, and this happiness can only come through living a life full of moral and intellectual virtue. Subsequently, the moral virtue is rooted in *character,* built upon a bedrock of good and proper habits. This character is different from competence or technical expertise; moreover, it is not based on the imposition of rules in order to govern good behavior. Aristotelian warriors perfect the virtues of courage, justice, moderation, generosity and are a high-minded people concerned with the highest of external goods—honor.[17]

Ancient Greece

The manner in which the warrior ethos has displayed itself through history is a story of dynamic adjustments due to technology and a static adherence to unwritten rules. In Sparta, a militaristic way of life guided the ruling class while the lower class tended to the fields and flocks. Spartan rulers began their military training soon after birth. With a literary education limited to poets who praised the virtues of warriors, these young men developed tremendous military and hunting skills. At the completion of their initiation period, called the *krypteia,* they became adults and warriors.[18] In contrast, young males in ancient Athens began two years of military training once they reached the age of

[15] Bradley C.S. Watson, "The Western Ethical Tradition and the Morality of the Warrior." *Armed Forces and Society,* Vol 26, No. 1, Fall 1999, 55-56.
[16] Watson, "The Western Ethical Tradition and the Morality of the Warrior." 56-57.
[17] Watson, "The Western Ethical Tradition and the Morality of the Warrior." 57-58.
[18] Fields, *The Code of the Warrior*, 74.

eighteen. Each trainee took an oath "not to dishonor his arms, not to desert his post, to extend the territory of his homeland, and to defend and respect its laws and religious cults."[19] After the two years, the trainees were considered adults and citizen-soldiers—hoplites. Though supported by the city during the two years of training, once becoming a hoplite, each was required to provide his own weapons and armor. Fighting, therefore, became both the responsibility and exclusive privilege of the well-to-do middle and upper classes.[20]

The Greek city-states fought according to an unwritten law, a warrior ethos, which included "respect for treaties, truces, and religious festivals; the right of the vanquished to recover their dead for burial; and the inviolability of heralds, priests, pilgrims, and sacred sites."[21] Part of this unwritten law includes fighting in the summer months, due to the agrarian nature of the society, to avoid the harvest.[22] Thucydides illustrates this in his record of the Peloponnesian war.[23] Furthermore, the type of weapons used on the battlefield was often limited, such as the occasional prohibition of slings due to their non-heroic connotation. To that end, during the Lelantine War between Eretria and Chacis, both sides agreed not to use missiles or slings.

Other facets of the Greek warrior ethos include seeking advice and consent from the oracle seeresses at Delphi or at other sacred sites prior to initiation of a war.[24] The Delphic oracles even attempted to make warfare more humane by prohibiting the use of projectiles and cutting off water during sieges.[25] Prisoners were not executed, but rather held for ransom or exchange. Appearing on the battlefield, the heralds of the defeated army would request a truce; and the request could not be denied. This allowed time to gather the dead and provide a proper burial. The fighting was exceptionally bloody, but in general, those who fled were not pursued beyond the battlefield.[26] The Greek historian Polybius summarized ancient war and the warrior ethos,

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[19] Pierre Ducrey, *Warfare in Ancient Greece*, New York: Schoken Books, 1985, 60.
[20] Fields, *The Code of the Warrior,* 74-75.
[21] Fields, *The Code of the Warrior,* 75.
[22] Victor Davis Hanson, *The Western Way of War: Infantry Battle in Classical Greece*, California: University of California Press, 1989, 27-39.
[23] Robert B. Strassler, ed. *The Landmark Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide to the Peloponnesian War*, The Free Press: New York, 1996,(1.141.3,5;3.15.2;4.6.1), 81, 166, 226,
[24] Strassler, ed. *The Landmark Thucydides*, (1.25.1-2: 1.118.3; 1.126.4-6; 3-92.5), 17, 65, 69, 205.
[25] Fields, *The Code of the Warrior,* 74-76.
[26] Hanson, *The Western Way of War*, 197-209. And Fields, *The Code of the Warrior,* 68-79.

> *The ancients would not consent to get the better of their enemies by fraud, regarding no success as brilliant or secure unless they crushed the spirit of their adversaries in open battle. For this reason they entered into a convention amongst themselves to use against each other neither secret missiles nor those discharged from a distance, and considered it was only hand to hand battle at close quarters which was truly decisive. Hence they preceded war by a declaration, and when they intended to do battle gave notice of the fact and of the spot to which they would proceed and array their army.*[27]

A Spartan legend states that the warrior's mother would send her son to battle telling him to come back with his shield, or on it. For if a warrior came back from battle without his shield, it meant he had broken from the ranks and fled from battle. The design of the shield protected the man next to him in the formation; therefore, to return without the shield indicated cowardice and the broken faith of his comrades. If the warrior returned with his shield, he had fought bravely. If he returned on the shield, he was either wounded or dead—but honor was still intact. This admonition on the part of Spartan mothers is not heartless; rather, it is spoken from great love. The mother's desire is for her child to return with an immense sense of self-esteem, self-respect, and be justifiably proud of his performance under enormous pressure, not tortured and destroyed by guilt and shame. "To come back with their shields was to come back still feeling like warriors, not like cowards or murderers."[28]

Romans

The Roman Empire supplies an interesting study of dichotomy between the Hedonism of the society and the Stoicism of its legionnaires—a battle between the extremes of self-indulgence and self-discipline. History provides ample documentation of the extravagance and excess of Roman society. The bloody spectator sports in the amphitheater, including the slaughter of animals, torture of criminals, and martyring of Christians, were bread and circuses for the masses. The more disturbing facet of this hedonistic society is that Roman spectators were not required or forced to turn out for the

[27] W. R. Conner, "Early Greek Land Warfare as Symbolic Expression," Past and Present 119 (May 1988): 19. Quoted in Fields, *The Code of the Warrior,* 75-76.
[28] French, *The Code of the Warrior: Exploring Warrior Values Past and Present,* 241-242.

bloody exhibits, yet the amphitheater was always filled to capacity. The crowd's constant demand for something new and extreme fueled the creation of novel ways to induce pain and inflict agony.[29]

The foil for this intemperance is found in the philosophies of the Stoics. Stoicism's central tenet is that every individual has the capacity to determine whether to live a good life—a life considered worth living. A man's will is the one thing he can always control, according to Stoic beliefs, and the greatest loss is the loss of character and a lapse of virtue. Living a noble life is a choice to exhibit a strong character by performing one's moral duty and acting honorably to fellow men. A noble life is not only more satisfying, but ultimately morally superior. The emperor Marcus Aurelius was a committed Stoic and wrote much of his Stoic understandings while on military campaigns in his *Meditations*.[30] Stoicism offered the Roman warrior "a code which was manly, rational, and temperate, a code which insisted on just and virtuous dealing, self-discipline, unflinching fortitude, and complete freedom from the storms of passion [and] was admirably suited to the Roman character."[31]

Another pillar of Stoic thought instructed the warrior that he should never allow the death of a comrade to affect his personal performance in battle or in the completion of his obligations. According to Stoics, allowing an experience to affect oneself personally is a choice. A Stoic warrior is to maintain his personal honor and behave virtuously despite what happens around him. Remaining true at all costs also includes enduring physical pain, rather than enduring the loss of honor or a display of cowardice. Aurelius' position on pain is that it may fall into only one of two categories. Either the pain can be tolerated or it brings about death. The Stoic warrior does not entertain the notion that there exists a level of pain that is intolerable; instead he trusts in his strict mental discipline. Furthermore, Stoics taught that one must never have a haughty or superior attitude, nor find fault with non-Stoics. As excessive pride hinders one's performance and arrogance only misdirects one's energies, humility was a Stoic virtue that steered one toward more honorable pursuits.[32]

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[29] French, *The Code of the Warrior: Exploring Warrior Values Past and Present*, 63-92.
[30] French, *The Code of the Warrior: Exploring Warrior Values Past and Present*, 63-75.
[31] R.H. Barrow, *The Romans*, New York: Penguin, 1986, (1949 reprint), 10.
[32] French, *The Code of the Warrior: Exploring Warrior Values Past and Present*, 76-78.

The distinct differences between the Stoic beliefs Marcus Aurelius instilled in the legionnaires and the Hedonistic ways of Roman society could not be more pronounced. In an age where their society clung to a self-gratifying and selfish nature, the Stoic warriors exhibited the same *gallant atavism* described by Toner.[33] Not all soldiers of the Roman army were Stoic sages, nor were they immune to the hedonistic temptations of their society. However, despite its flaws, the enduring impression of the Roman army is the Stoic face that inspires soldiers through the centuries: one of an efficient committed professional warrior, unflinching while marching in perfect formation.[34] The Jewish historian Josephus describes the Roman army in the reign of the emperor Vespasian:

> *All their duties are performed with the same discipline, the same safety precautions: gathering wood, securing food if supplies are low, hauling water—all these are done in turn by each unit. Nor does each man eat breakfast or dinner whenever he feels like it; they all eat together. Trumpets signal the hours for sleep, guard duty, and walking. Nothing is done except by command….Absolute obedience to the officers creates an army which is well behaved in peacetime and which moves as a single body when in battle—so cohesive are the ranks, so correct are the turns, so quick are the soldiers' ears for orders, eyes for signals, and hands for action….One might rightfully say that the people who created the Roman Empire are greater than the Empire itself.*[35]

Knights and the Age of Chivalry

The word *chivalry* derives from the French word *cheval*, or horse, and the *chevalier* is the knight. The term chivalry instantly creates popular images of a more idealistic form of warfare in the Middle Ages stirring connotations of reverence, honor, virtue, loyalty, and duty.[36] The chivalric ideal includes basic warrior virtues of Indo-European bands, Christian values of humane treatment, and the romanticism of courtly love; but to its detriment, it also includes the image and self-righteous brutality of holy war. Therefore, the code of chivalry adds numerous positive elements to a warrior ethos,

[33] Toner, "Gallant Atavism," 13-22.
[34] French, *The Code of the Warrior: Exploring Warrior Values Past and Present*, 89.
[35] Josephus, *History of the Jewish War*, 3.71-97, 104, 105, 107, 108. Quoted in French, *The Code of the Warrior: Exploring Warrior Values Past and Present*, 89-90.
[36] John A. Lynn, *Battle: A History of Combat and Culture*, Colorado: Westview Press, 2003, 78.

but also negative aspects, to include holy war. This chivalric code established its heritage in western thinking more than any other.[37]

The fielded armies of the middle ages do not conform to modern standards. The armies consisted primarily of aristocratic knights and disenfranchised farmers, rather than the diverse representation of a free society. Many of the mounted warriors were nobles, supported by the peasants who worked their lands, but others were individuals who exchanged their military skill and equipment for either support at the lord's manor or for land.[38]

The Church held great sway, and the domineering power of religion pervaded the times. By the eleventh century, the Church gained complete control over the knighting ceremony. Therefore, knights were ordained, not created. The Christian chivalric code held to the belief that it was sinful to kill a fellow Christian, as that equated to spilling the blood of Christ. The knight also had numerous religious obligations, such as attending Mass every day and fasting frequently; in addition, he pledged to defend the Holy Church, the widow, the orphan, and the poor.[39]

Additionally, the knight was not to "kill a vanquished or helpless enemy in battle; not to take part in a false judgment or an act of treason (or to withdraw if these could not be prevented); not to give evil counsel to a lady; and to give help 'if possible,' to a fellow being in distress."[40] At the heart of chivalry, expressed through literature of the age, were the virtues of military prowess, courage, honor, and loyalty. The combination of military prowess and courage guaranteed honor. The honor sought is best interpreted as a reputation of adhering to, and being an example of, the warrior virtues. The loyalty required of a knight extended beyond the battlefield, and included loyalty in love as well. In addition, the virtuous knight was both generous and courteous, and sought courtly love. The involvement of women in chivalry is fundamental to the chivalric code, for they were important supporters of the code. The knights, seeking to avoid the humiliation of a female's disdain, pursued the honor that came from her adoration.[41]

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[37] Fields, *The Code of the Warrior,* 133.
[38] Lynn, *Battle: A History of Combat and Culture,* 79.
[39] Fields, *The Code of the Warrior,* 138-146.
[40] Fields, *The Code of the Warrior,* 141.
[41] Lynn, *Battle: A History of Combat and Culture,* 78-85.

The preeminent, and often the most recognizable, display of chivalry is found in the practice of and fondness for tournaments. In the tournaments, the social and military elite, the main practitioners and consumers of chivalry, created an artificial type of combat in which knights fought knights and chivalry ruled supreme. These tournaments provided restrictions requiring a certain level of decorum and restraint, rules that real war could not offer. Though still very dangerous and potentially deadly, tournaments became less extreme and more stylized over time.

Despite the often glowing literature of the chivalric nature of the knights and warriors of the Middle Ages, wars were brutal in execution. During the Hundred Years War, England sent raiding parties, called *chevauchees*, which devastated the countryside and were characterized by pillage, burning, rape, and murder. Though the *chevauchees* were the extreme, pillaging the conquered country was endemic in medieval warfare. Living off the land made predatory contact with the local population inevitable. War was also considered a method to obtain wealth; plundering of the conquered populace was prevalent. *Chevauchees* often left their mark through burning of the cities or towns, leaving complete destruction in their wake. Though the *chevauchees* were not the only marauding horde devoid of chivalric virtues, they epitomize the brutality of medieval warfare separate from adherence to a chivalric ethos.[42]

The eventual decline of the knight was due to the development of new weapons. Knights fought in close combat. The advent of missile weapons—to include the crossbow, longbow, and the gun in particular—altered the paradigm for the knight.[43] The idea of these longer-distance missile weapons attached a stigma of non-heroic warfare in which physical courage and military prowess were no longer required. The knights disdained the use of the new weapons, but the pressure on nations to use the powerful technology was too strong, and knights became obsolete. The nature of the landscape changed as kingdoms replaced fiefdoms; nation-states replaced kingdoms; and the Holy Catholic Church no longer held the a claim as the only universal Church. "But the image remains—the knight in shining armor, gleaming, protected, hidden, isolated behind helm;

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[42] Lynn, *Battle: A History of Combat and Culture*, 85-99. In addition, a discussion on the brutality of the Crusades is found in Fields, *The Code of the Warrior: In History, Myth, and Everyday Life*, 142-150.
[43] Lt Col Dave Grossman and Loren Christiansen, *On Combat: The Psychology and Physiology of Deadly Conflict in War and in Peace*, PPCT Research Publications: USA, 2004, 212-213.

yet gallant, courtly, protector of the weak, of maidens, orphans, widows; dedicated to God, devoted to the distant lady, never turning back from the challenge of a joust, brave and gentle, proud and courteous, forever riding off in search of adventure, in quest of the Holy Grail or holy war."[44]

The Impact of Technology on the Warrior Ethos

Throughout the ages, the warrior ethos consistently revolves around the virtues of courage, honor, integrity, loyalty, and duty, among other traits. While the warrior is the individual, the ethos is the character of the warrior. Plato and Aristotle's ethical frameworks, in combination with the warrior ethoi of the past, provide an excellent foundation for the character of the warrior. However, the dramatic changes in technology throughout the ages add complexity, and often uncertainty, to the warrior ethos.

As battlefield technology matured, the side with the greatest military prowess and strength no longer necessarily won the battle, but often the antagonist with the better technology prevailed. Perhaps the greatest technological advancement on the battlefield occurred with the advent of gunpowder. Certainly, prior to the introduction of the gun on the battlefield, man continually created weapons of greater accuracy or killing power. The introduction of the archer, the longbow, the trebuchet, the catapult, and cavalry are all significant examples of such advancement. In 1346, Edward III introduced to the continent longbows and a peculiar fire tube made by armorers in the tower of London. Two hundred forty years later, in 1588, expecting a Spanish invasion, Britain mustered her forces and not a single longbow would remain among the trained troops. In the intervening years, the odd fire tube replaced every single longbow and the age of man-powered warfare drew to a close. The leap from both man-powered and mechanical-powered warfare to that of a chemical-based warfare with the advent of the gun was clearly a watershed event in the course of human history and changed most every facet of warfare.[45]

The advancement of weapons technology increased the complexity of the battlefield, leading many in the West to study and theorize a "science" of warfare, "as if,"

[44] Fields, *The Code of the Warrior*, 167.
[45] Robert L. O'Connell, *Of Arms and Men: A History of War, Weapons, and Aggression*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1989, 105-123.

according to one commentator, "the introduction of such skills could somehow make battle more controllable or predictable and perhaps thereby more humane."[46] The application of this science of warfare is readily seen in both the writings of military theorists and in the battles of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[47] This science of warfare, in combination with the advancing technology, did little to make warfare more humane, but rather brought the brutality of war to the very citizens and society it sought to protect.[48]

The new weapons that emerged over the years led to potential battlefield asymmetries. The creation of rifles and cannons with greater range, enhanced accuracy, and reduced reload times—not to mention advancements in bullets, fuses, and cannon shells—often outpaced the capability of the fielded forces to use them. In the American Civil War, for example, improved small arms were the dominant weapon; however, only a few years later in the Franco-Prussian War, artillery reigned supreme. The tide had turned. No longer were courage and leadership the primary ingredients for success on the battlefield, rather it was the latest weapons that killed men and won battles.[49]

World War I is perhaps the first war in which so many new technologies were used on the battlefield in such a large scale. The pace of technological advance prohibited any meaningful understanding of either the tactical or strategic implications of their employment, resulting in experimentation on the grandest scale. "Even worse, arms did not simply dominate, they did so in a manner which *made a mockery of the warrior ethic*. With few exceptions the key weapons in this great conflict were devices which held little appeal according to the traditional criteria by which armaments had always been judged. Skill, strength, swiftness, cunning, and aggressiveness were rendered nearly irrelevant. Combatants were gassed, torpedoed, bombarded by invisible artillery, or mowed down randomly by puny-looking machine guns; there was hardly a heroic death to be had. (emphasis added)"[50]

There was one exception to the impersonal slaughter brought on by advancing technology, one that returned some semblance of chivalry and honor to the battlefield.

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[46] Hanson, *The Western Way of War*, 225.
[47] Lynn, *Battle: A History of Combat and Culture*, 111-144, 179-217.
[48] Hanson, *The Western Way of War*, 222-227.
[49] O'Connell, *Of Arms and Men*, 202-211.
[50] O'Connell, *Of Arms and Men*, 242-243.

High above the battlefields, dancing on the edge of control, new knights of the air engaged in mortal combat. This new brand of aerial jousting reinvigorated an element of introspective combat that was thought to be irretrievably lost and implied that advanced technology is not necessarily incompatible with a traditional warrior ethos.[51] However, in short fashion the dimension of flight yielded a potent addition to the vast array of technological achievements as strategic bombers and other technologies found their way from the factory to the frontline, blurring the vision of a distinctively chivalric method of combat.

World War II provided great impetus to new and emerging technologies to include the jet engine, rockets, guided weapons, and the first atomic weapon. Post World War II, military technology rapidly advanced in all the fighting domains, to include space. Success in battles such as Operation Desert Storm and Operation Allied Force can lead strategists and political leaders alike to think that of all the factors in war, military hardware is preeminent. Yet, while it may seem prudent to seek advantages through new technologies, the religious, social, and political values of each society will determine its ability to achieve the most from a promising technology.[52]

Military technology has certainly had tremendous effects on the battlefield. However, it also impacts the warrior and the warrior ethos. Technology can make combatants completely detached from both the impacts and horrors of their actions. As one author laments, "The combatants in modern warfare pitch bombs from 20,000 feet in the morning… and then eat hamburgers for dinner hundreds of miles away…. The prehistoric warrior met his foe in a direct struggle of sinew, muscle, and spirit."[53] Methods of warfare at a distance have the capacity to take the humanity from the men and women who operate military systems. Technology can make taking human life too easy. It separates the individuals from the impacts of their actions, forsaking them of the opportunity to understand the enormity of what they have done. Technology does not eliminate the need for a warrior ethos; it enhances it. As technology increasingly removes the individual from the battlefield—and the dangers and fears therein—the opportunity to diverge from an honorable warrior ethos escalates. Hence, the warrior

[51] O'Connell, *Of Arms and Men*, 243, 261-265.
[52] Lynn, *Battle: A History of Combat and Culture*, xvii-xix.
[53] Robert Heckler, *In Search of the Warrior Spirit*, California: North Atlantic Books, 1990, 111.

ethos is necessary to prevent a desensitized technological slaughter of the enemy and prevent relegating the human operator to a mere cog in a system. The warrior ethos is the code that provides both a moral and psychological armor to protect warriors from losing their souls and becoming monsters in their own eyes.[54]

In conclusion, the warrior and the warrior ethos are inseparable: one cannot discuss the warrior without the warrior ethos, for the one is incomplete without the other. The warrior ethos supplies the framework by which a warrior defines nobility, loyalty, honor, courage, and sacrifice. The warrior is more than just an individual, for without the warrior ethos there is no warrior; just because one embodies a warrior ethos, however, does not consequently make one a warrior. Technology adds a complicating factor to the warrior ethos as distance makes killing physically and emotionally effortless. Technology's effect on the warrior is explored further in the next chapter.

[54] French, *The Code of the Warrior: Exploring Warrior Values Past and Present*, 10-11.

Chapter 2

Technology and the Declining Air Force Warrior

I am tired and sick of war. Its glory is all moonshine. It is only those who have never fired a shot nor heard the shrieks and groans of the wounded who cry aloud for blood, more vengeance, more desolation. War is Hell!

- General William T. Sherman

Courage is almost a contradiction in terms. It means a strong desire to live taking the form of readiness to die.

- Gilbert K. Chesterton

Courage is rightly esteemed the first of human qualities, because it is the quality that guarantees all others.

- Sir Winston S. Churchill

Those who have not yet realized danger are generally the bravest soldiers.

- Colmar von der Goltz, German field marshal, World War I

The historical American military experience is a testament to the great faith placed in technology and technological advancement. The perceived notion within the Air Force and American society is that technology offers a relatively cheap and humane method of fighting war.[1] Since its inception, the Air Force has been particularly keen to explore technological solutions. This is abundantly evident in the progressive development of aircraft, ordnance, missiles, satellites, and cyber-warfare capabilities that continually seeks to assuage the institutional need for greater technology. However, this leads to an unbalanced attitude toward war in which traditional notions of military skill and human sacrifice are replaced by a distorted over-reliance on technological solutions and sterile combat that leads one to expect rapid victories with minimal casualties and virtually little to no damage incurred to friendly forces. This technologically determinist course sets a dangerous precedent in the human endeavor of warfare. During the

[1] Lt Col Donald Baucom, "Technological War: Reality and the American Myth," *Air University Review*, September-October 1981, 56.

American Civil War at the Battle of Fredericksburg, General Robert E. Lee stated, **"**It is well that war is so terrible—otherwise we would grow too fond of it." As military technology continues to develop, the human recedes farther from the battlefield, with all of its associated horrors, emotions, dangers, and fears, creating a not-so-terrible war that is all too easy to grow fond of.

Technology and its Effect on the Moral Factors in War

Technological advances in the military sphere are undoubtedly force multipliers. Precision weapons, missiles, satellite reconnaissance, global communication, and cyber capabilities enable commanders to achieve desired results more rapidly while greatly reducing both friendly-force exposure and collateral damage. Technology, however, does not impact the battlefield only physically; the consequences extend into the moral realm of war as well. The overemphasis on technology comes "at the expense of other elements that have traditionally played a major role in military victory, such as superior combat leaders, skilled and dedicated fighting men, willingness to sacrifice, and sound strategy."[2] Technology has removed the operator so far from the battlefield as to reduce, if not completely eliminate, what military theorists believed to be the most important factors in war—the moral factors. Among the renowned theorists, the impact of fear, danger, and courage speak to the preeminence of moral factors.

Carl Von Clausewitz's *On War* places great emphasis on moral factors. Clausewitz claims there are only two motives that make men fight, either hostile feelings or hostile intent.[3] These motives have a direct impact on the battlefield. Once the fighting commences, Clausewitz expounds on the necessity of courage in combat to achieve victory: "War is the realm of danger; therefore courage is the soldier's first requirement."[4] Clausewitz analyzes the requirement of courage and narrows the needed courage to two distinct types, courage to overcome personal danger and courage to accept responsibility.[5] Conversely, as those who employ technology are detached from the

[2] Baucom, "Technological War: Reality and the American Myth," 62.
[3] Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War,* trans. and ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984, 76.
[4] Clausewitz, *On War*, 101.
[5] Clausewitz, *On War*, 101.

battlefield, one creates the conditions that remove any sense of personal danger and therefore eliminates the need for physical courage.

Through his discussions on danger and courage, hostile feelings and intentions, Clausewitz underscores the fact that war is not simply a battle of material forces. In one of his most poetic expressions of the moral forces in war, he states, "the physical seem little more than the wooden hilt, while the moral factors are the precious metal, the real weapon, the finely-honed blade."[6] While Clausewitz may have marveled at today's technological wonders on the battlefield, he would be disconcerted with the ease at which many of the systems are employed and the lack of moral fortitude and physical courage required. By eliminating the need for physical courage to overcome fear and danger, Clausewitz's maxim that "the moral elements are the most important in war" may soon become irrelevant to the Air Force.[7]

J.F.C. Fuller's *The Foundations of the Science of War* provides a complement to Clausewitz. Fuller describes Clausewitz's view on the physical force as the means of war and the mental force as the impulse and reminds the reader of Clausewitz's statement that the moral forces are essential in war.[8] Fuller claims that through the enterprises of man—namely stability, activity, and cooperation—three governing instincts develop: fear, courage, and comradeship.[9] As he poignantly states, "without fear war would be a struggle of maniacs; without courage it would be a scramble of cunning cowards, of assassins who could only knife an enemy when his back is turned; and without comradeship it would be the brawl of a mob latent with panic."[10] Fuller proceeds to declare that collectively fear, courage, and comradeship are the moral elements that animate war.[11]

Through his continued examination of the elements of fear, courage, and comradeship, Fuller deftly expands the discussion from the individual, to the commanding general, to the crowd (i.e. the army). Interchanging morale for comradeship, Fuller begins his examination by establishing a "relationship between will,

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[6] Clausewitz, *On War*, 185.
[7] Clausewitz, *On War*, 184.
[8] J.F.C. Fuller, *The Foundations of the Science of War*, London: Hutchinson & Co., 1926, 113-114.
[9] Fuller, *The Foundations of the Science of War*, 115-117.
[10] Fuller, *The Foundations of the Science of War*, 117.
[11] Fuller, *The Foundations of the Science of War*, 117.

the final expression of the mind, and fear, courage, and morale, the three moral elements in war."[12] In his assessment of the individual, Fuller describes how the elements of fear and morale balance the human will.[13] "In war, fear must similarly be balanced, and we balance it by means of what we call morale, which draws its strength from the instinct of self-sacrifice, just as fear is derived from self-preservation, and courage from self-assertion."[14] Fuller states that morale must balance fear in order for the will to cooperate with and act on courage. If fear exceeds morale, the result is a flight from danger. If morale exceeds fear, an unstable rage or frenzy may result.[15] This creates a quandary for the technologically advanced force. If the operator is removed from the battlefield, there is no danger and therefore no fear. Hence, fear is not an influencing factor and the will requires no courage to act. More ominously, in the absence of fear, there is no clear balance to morale; therefore, there is no natural moral restraint to legislate against a frenzy of destruction.

Another penetrating source on the impacts of both courage and fear in battle can be found in Lord Moran's brilliant exposition, *The Anatomy of Courage*. Moran describes courage as the necessary, and quintessential, characteristic of man. All humans feel fear, but courage is a "moral quality…it is a cold choice of two alternatives."[16] These alternatives are to flee the situation causing the fear, or to seek the will power to provide the fortitude not to quit. Moran's in-depth discussion and first-hand accounts of both fear and courage provide insightful arguments as to why courage is such a desired attribute not only for fighting men, but also for a country. Moran contends courage is not common and that "all the fine things in war as in peace are the work of a few men; that the honor of our race is in the keeping of but a fraction of her people."[17] Moran is neither the first, nor the last, to link courage of a nation's people with the honor of the nation. What does this say for a nation that strives to replace men with machines and exchange knowledge for courage? Advanced technological systems, such as the Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA), no longer require even a modicum of physical courage in order to apply

[12] Fuller, *The Foundations of the Science of War*, 117.
[13] Fuller, *The Foundations of the Science of War*, 117-120.
[14] Fuller, *The Foundations of the Science of War*, 119.
[15] Fuller, *The Foundations of the Science of War*, 119-120.
[16] Lord Moran, *The Anatomy of Courage*, Eyre and Spottiswoode LTD, London, 1945, 67.
[17] Moran, *The Anatomy of Courage*, xiv.

deadly force.[18] Despite the numerous legal and political constraints, a nation walks a slippery moral slope when the only physical constraint on the application of force is the amount of fuel and ordnance on hand.

Colonel Ardant Du Picq was well aware of the influence of technology on the battlefield and its impact on war and wrote about the influence of moral forces in his work *Battle Studies*. Expressing man's moral constancy despite technology's continuing advancement, Du Picq states, "The art of war is subjected to many modifications by industrial and scientific progress. But one thing does not change, the heart of man."[19] Du Picq asserts the increased destructive capacity of weapons yields an increase in the courage needed in order to face such weapons. While one can build more weapons of greater destructive capacity, one can only garner so much individual courage to face them. Therefore, man's ability to summon courage is a limiting factor in the battlefield equation. However, Du Picq adds that despite advancing technology, man does not change. Rather, when put to the test, courage can collectively be enhanced by strengthening the organization and increasing discipline.[20]

Du Picq readily acknowledges that man has instinctively sought weapons with greater reach. The individuals on the receiving end of these advanced weapons have to deal with fear and courage like never before, as the enemy is often unseen, requiring greater unity and cohesiveness of units.[21] Despite the great difficulties in building the courage to overcome advanced technologies on the battlefield, Du Picq lays out a warning to those who seek superiority only in material capabilities at the expense of moral factors.

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[18] The role of Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) within the Air Force, and the US military as a whole, has expanded greatly in recent years. An RPA is an aircraft that flies without a human crew on board and is controlled from a remote site. The aircraft provide outstanding Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities, but many have also been armed in order to provide a limited attack capability. RPAs are often preferred for missions that require endurance to provide persistent ISR of targets, and subsequent attack of such targets if need be, or for missions that may be considered too dangerous or politically untenable for manned aircraft. A more in-depth review of RPAs within the Air Force is found at US Air Force Official Website, "The U.S. Air Force Remotely Piloted Aircraft and Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Strategic Vision," 2005, http://www.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-060322-009.pdf.

[19] Colonel Ardant Du Picq, *Battle Studies: Ancient and Modern Battle*, Translated by Col John Greely and Maj Robert Cotton, The Military Service Publishing Company, Harrisburg: PA, 1946, 109.

[20] Du Picq, *Battle Studies*, 109-110.

[21] Du Picq, *Battle Studies*, 112-118.

> *With equal or even inferior power of destruction he will win who has the resolution to advance, who by his formations and maneuvers can continually threaten his adversary with a new phase of material action, who, in a word has the moral ascendency. Moral effect inspires fear. Fear must be changed to terror in order to vanquish.*
>
> *When confidence is placed in superiority of material means, valuable as they are against an enemy at a distance, it may be betrayed by the actions of the enemy. If he closes with you in spite of your superiority in means of destruction, the morale of the enemy mounts with the loss of your confidence. His morale dominates yours. You flee.*[22]

It is interesting to note that as technology in war advances, the moral forces that constrain the emotional and human endeavor of war are reduced. Technology ultimately alters the attributes and values of the historic warrior. No longer is courage in the face of danger required. RPA operators are not looking over their shoulder to see if they are being fired upon, for they are completely disconnected from any risk. The reduction, and in some cases the elimination, of fear, risk, danger, and courage fosters a myth of technological war that perpetuates the belief that those who create, manage, and operate technologies from afar are more important than the warriors who wield weapons on the battlefield and those who lead them. This technologically-centric method of thinking yields the perception that leads many to assume that technology gains the victory in war rather than the warriors who place themselves at risk.[23] Equating the technician, operator, or the technology to soldiers who place their lives on the line is the first step on the path to eliminating the moral forces in war, thereby making the decision to initiate action as easy as pushing a button.

By creating the technology that completely removes the operator from all risk, fear, and the requirement for courage, one creates a fissure in the traditional virtues and values that define a warrior. The enterprise of war is a blight on humanity. The moral forces of fear, risk, danger, and courage provide restraint and a sense of humanity to war, as opposed to the robotic, mindless application of force achieved through lines of computer code. The moral forces keep technology from making war an endeavor lacking in human emotion or feeling. The warrior has the heart to willingly step forward, accepts the emotional burden of fear and risk, and simultaneously recognizes the potential

[22] Du Picq, *Battle Studies*, 124.
[23] Baucom, "Technological War: Reality and the American Myth," 62.

dangerous consequences. To the warrior, courage is "about victory over fear. It is not about the absence of fear."[24]

Technology and its Effect on Killing

Advancing military technology proceeds on a path that ultimately may lead to the removal of the human from the scene of battle, thus eliminating human emotions that often restrain those engaged in combat. Attempting to remove the human from the risks and dangers of combat through advanced technology appears to be the humane, or at least more sterile, way forward. After all, why expose people to harm if the technology exists which can keep harm from occurring to them? Technology offers the path of least resistance, one in which leaders and policy makers can coerce and inflict harm on the enemy at a minimal cost of human life to their own forces. A sadly ironic aspect is that as technology decreases the exposure to risk, it dramatically increases the ease at which one can kill on a grand scale.

The main thrust of military technology is to make the mission of killing people and breaking things easier and safer for the soldier, sailor, airman, or marine. The basic premise is that if "someone is out to kill you and break your stuff, technology might be able to place you in a position to avoid their efforts, while enhancing your own against them."[25] The fundamental aim is to create safe, easy, and efficient warfare. Therefore, a machine is created which is easy to use, exceptionally lethal, and enhances the safety of the soldier, subsequently disengaging the soldier from the target.[26]

Lt Col Dave Grossman's landmark work, *On Killing*, provides a thorough examination of the soldiers' motivation to kill and the resultant effects killing has upon them.[27] Replete with examples from numerous armed conflicts throughout history that show only a small number of individuals actually fired at the enemy, Grossman argues that a human loathes killing another human.[28] Realizing this potential problem during the Vietnam conflict, the Army sought to overcome the hesitancy to kill. This was

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[24] P.W. Singer, *Wired for War: The Robotics Revolution and Conflict in the 21st Century*, The Penguin Press: New York, 2009, 332.
[25] D. Keith Shurtleff, "The Effects of Technology on Our Humanity," *Parameters*, Summer 2002, 101.
[26] Shurtleff, "The Effects of Technology on Our Humanity," 101-104.
[27] Lt Col Dave Grossman, *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society*, Little, Brown and Company: New York, 1995.
[28] Grossman, *On Killing*, 4.

accomplished through desensitization and conditioning of soldiers to dehumanize the enemy and overcome the natural resistance to killing.[29] While these training methods have proved effective, technology has also played a pivotal role.

In cooperation with desensitization, technology is the key factor that enables man to overcome the natural resistance to killing. Military technology increases the distance at which weapons can be employed against an enemy, to the point that RPA operators sit thousands of miles away and engage the enemy from a monitor. This separation is more than mere physical distance; it creates an emotional distance from the enemy as well. Grossman illustrates that the resistance to killing dramatically declines as both the physical and emotional distance increase.[30] The resistance to kill is minimal at great distances (for example RPA and cruise missile operators), while the hesitancy to kill reaches its zenith for those engaged in hand-to-hand combat. Grossman continues to explain that by killing at a great distance there is rarely, if ever, a felt need for repentance or regret.[31] "Technology, then, affects the warfighter in a very important way—it helps to overcome natural resistance and makes killing easier."[32]

This sets up an interesting dichotomy. On the one hand, it is natural and more humane to protect the service members from the impact of war. Hence, technological advancements in the range and accuracy of weapons increase the safety of the servicemen and women. On the other hand, the moral resistance to killing is so greatly reduced that killing can be done by tapping commands on a keyboard, clicking a mouse, or pressing a button on a joystick, with fewer qualms about the moral implications. Grossman contends that this distancing created by technology can lead to military personnel killing people they would otherwise never kill. Grossman uses the bombing of Hamburg in World War II as an example in which the individual bomber crews, from the relative safety of high altitude, inflicted great harm on the city, killing over 70,000 people in the process. Certainly, the bomber crews themselves would never have individually killed the women and children by their own hands, but the technology given to them enabled them to bomb their targets knowing that despite their great efforts to destroy only their

[29] Grossman, *On Killing*, 249-261.
[30] Grossman, *On Killing*, 97-98.
[31] Grossman, *On Killing*, 107-110.
[32] Shurtleff, "The Effects of Technology on Our Humanity," 105.

designated military target, innocent people would be killed nonetheless.[33] Richard Heckler in his work *In Search of the Warrior Spirit* describes the changing circumstances of the combatant.

> *For centuries the basic pattern of warfare remained the same…but it was ultimately the effects of industrialization…that forever altered the identity of the soldier-warrior…. The soldier-warrior could kill his collective enemy, which now included women and children, without ever seeing them. The cries of the dying and wounded went unheard by those who inflicted the pain. A man might slay hundreds and never see their blood flow.*
>
> *Less than a century after the Civil War ended, a single bomb, delivered miles above its target, would take the lives of more than 100,000 people, almost all civilians. The moral distance between this event and the tribal warrior facing a single opponent is far greater than even the thousands of years and transformations of culture that separate them.*[34]

What is ultimately clear in this dilemma between the safety of distance and the separation of moral restraint in the ability to kill is the necessity to maintain a warrior ethos. As described earlier, due to the immense responsibilities given to those who take life on behalf of society, prosecuting a target with both restraint and accuracy, and minimizing collateral damage is imperative. It is in the areas of accuracy and reduction of collateral damage that technology provides the greatest advancement to the humanity of warfare. New weapons, whether fired from mere yards to more than dozens of miles, enable the prosecution of a target to be more precise, with minimal exposure to danger for the innocent. No longer do hundreds of bombers need to fly directly over a target dropping thousands of bombs just to ensure enough hit the target. With the technology of today, a single bomber with a few dozen weapons can destroy numerous targets, launching its arsenal from well outside any threat capabilities, with only a miniscule chance of an errant munition landing in a residential area.

Americans tend to be highly attracted to the idea of a technological war. It enables the force structure to remain small, but potent. It also provides the appearance of a sanitary war to the public. Few things are as appealing to American humanism as the idea that a technological war saves American lives.[35] Yet, this reliance on technology

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[33] Grossman, *On Killing*, 99-106.
[34] Richard Heckler, *In Search of the Warrior Spirit*, North Atlantic Books: Berkley, CA, 1990, 108-109.
[35] Baucom, "Technological War: Reality and the American Myth," 61.

insulates the operators from the impact of their actions, reducing the inherent moral compunction against killing a fellow human and enabling the extermination of lives that normally would never be taken. Those who operate at significant distances from the enemy walk a fine line in preventing the human endeavor of war from becoming a massive, desensitized slaughter. Indeed, technology does not eliminate violence and brutality from war; rather, it often allows the operator of such technology to maintain a sense of physical cleanliness and emotional sterility despite wielding a tool of great destruction upon the enemy. Technology requires the warrior ethos more than ever to prevent moral corruption and to keep those who employ it from losing sight of the moral significance of their actions. Perish the thought that advanced technology produces more operators who describe their experience in war as one operator who described his Iraq war experience, fought from a cubicle in Qatar, "It's like a video game. It can get a little bloodthirsty. But it's [explicative] cool."[36]

Technology and the Air Force: The Decline of the Warrior

The inextricable link between the Air Force and technology communicates the story of the Air Force, from the Wright brothers' flying machine to the advanced aircraft and satellites of today. Without the technological achievement of the airplane, the Army Air Corps, and subsequently the Air Force, would never have come into being. The Air Force needs technological creations in order to fly, fight, and win in air, space, and cyberspace. Due to this overwhelming dependence on technology, the Air Force is more apt to fall prey to the enticing ease with which the enemy can be engaged through technology's alluring methods of killing. Of all the armed services, the Air Force often creates the greatest physical and emotional distances between the service member and the enemy, seen most vividly in the armed RPA, standoff air-launched weapons, and the Intercontinental Ballistic Missile. Considering the current plans to expand the roles and missions of RPAs, the physical and emotional distance between the Air Force operator and the enemy will only widen. Thus, the Air Force is steering a path to becoming a force that will be primarily devoid of individuals who have needed courage in the face of danger or who have had to struggle with the moral angst of killing a fellow human. With

[36] Singer, *Wired for War*, 332.

the current pace of technological progress, it will not be too far into the future that Air Force service members could be replaced, for all intents and purposes, by managers who program and enable highly sophisticated killing machines—a "warrior-less" force.

The history of airmen displaying courage in the face of great personal danger in combat is the proud heritage of the Air Force. Lord Moran in *The Anatomy of Courage* describes the fears and courage of the airborne warriors during World War I. He intimately details the haunting fears of being alone in the aircraft and being completely reliant on the quality of the equipment in order to stay alive. He also describes the intense dread of being shot down over the English Channel, hoping the proper steps have been taken in order to provide a rescue at sea before succumbing to hypothermia. The mental strain of flying combined with the added pressure of avoiding ground fire and maneuvering to the target, all while constantly searching for aerial threats, demanded men of immense personal courage.[37]

Some of the greatest examples of courage by airmen are found in the early days of flying in World War I. The aircraft was a relatively new invention. Barely a decade had passed since Kitty Hawk. Aircraft design and control were experiments of trial-and-error. Despite the lack of instrument navigation, radar warning receivers, advanced weaponry, or an ejection seat, pilots climbed into the cockpit and faced the enemy in the battle of the skies. James Hudson's *Hostile Skies* provides numerous jaw-dropping tales of fear and courage of airmen in World War I that complement Lord Moran's work. One such story details how a pilot flew his mortally damaged aircraft only a few feet off the ground for five nautical miles in order to reach friendly territory. This, in and of itself, requires great skill and courage. Moreover, he flew first over the German trench lines under hostile fire, and also withstood the withering fragmentation of an incoming friendly artillery barrage before crossing no-man's-land in order to land back on Allied territory.[38] This is but one heroic account. The annals of history are peppered with stories of heroism and courage by airmen from the dawn of flight to the current day.

The courage of these aircrews shows itself not only through heroic acts in the air, but also through their simple willingness to fly. From the first training flights in the

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[37] Moran, *The Anatomy of Courage*, 104-114.
[38] James J. Hudson, *Hostile Skies: A Combat History of the American Air Service in World War I*, Syracuse University Press: New York, 1968, 148-150.

wood-and-fabric airframes of World War I through the massive increase in training during World War II, training accidents and fatalities were commonplace. Once the training was complete, the danger only increased. During World War II, an airman's chance of completing a tour of duty was slightly above 50 percent, depending on the theater.[39] The long odds of surviving to reach the required mission count were well known among the aircrews, yet they continued to fly with very few seeking a way out of the hazardous missions.

A post-war analysis of fear experienced by aircrews demonstrated the main causes were primarily the result of either feeling helpless or hopeless.[40] Therefore, it should come as no surprise that the three most fear-provoking occurrences were "being fired upon when you had no chance to shoot back, hearing a report of an enemy aircraft that you could not see, and the sight of enemy tracer bullets."[41] In addition, the cause of the fear changed as aircrews gained experience through accomplishing missions. With each mission, the fear of cowardice in the face of danger diminished, but the fear of death and injury rose. It is interesting to note that infantrymen found similar changes in the sources of their fear.[42]

A further study of Army Air Corps personnel in World War II also suggested the best methods to overcome and control fear. It determined the preeminent factors to reducing and controlling fear came primarily through one word—confidence. Personal confidence in one's capabilities, as well as in fellow crew members, confidence in the equipment, and confidence in leaders were the primary drivers to reducing and controlling fear.[43]

The tales of fear and heroism are not limited to the eras of World War I and II. Air Force personnel continued to distinguish themselves in combat in every conflict. From the dogfights in the skies over "Mig-Alley" in Korea, the daunting military airlift operations at Khe Sanh, and the dangerous combat search and rescue operations in Iraq and Kosovo, to the brave Joint Terminal Air Controller's (JTAC) directing close air

[39] Stanley Rachman, *Fear and Courage*, W.H. Freeman and Company: New York, 1978, 36.
[40] Rachman, *Fear and Courage*, 36-48.
[41] Rachman, *Fear and Courage*, 39.
[42] Rachman, *Fear and Courage*, 44-45.
[43] Rachman, *Fear and Courage*, 48-50.

support missions in Afghanistan, the accounts of Air Force personnel performing courageously as warriors in the face of danger are prevalent.

The technology of today is far-and-away superior to the airframes of yesteryear. The inherent confidence aircrews have in both the equipment and in those who maintain it is unparalleled. Technological advancements enable those who must thrust themselves into dangerous situations to be confident of their equipment, alleviating a historic cause of fear and allowing a greater focus on the mission at hand. Nevertheless, advancing technology in the Air Force is rapidly reducing the need for physical courage in any sense of the word. The current generation of RPAs is to be supplanted by a new, more advanced generation of combat vehicles. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff has testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee that the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter may well be the last manned fighter aircraft the United States will produce.[44] The next generation of heavy bomber aircraft may or may not be manned. Technology is rapidly replacing the historic Air Force warrior with a new operator who is separate from the battle. These professional airmen will never face physical fear, or face their enemy on the field of battle, but only view the enemy coldly and impersonally through a video screen. The physical and emotional distance between the combatants will continue to increase. The Air Force will devolve, for better or worse, into a force of technological operators who have no shared experience with the sister services of going to war.[45] All but gone will be the days of Air Force warriors risking their lives flying through weather and enemy fire to provide the necessary firepower or drop the needed supplies. To the soldier or Marine, the drone operator will most likely appear as a risk-averse, technological computer specialist who values the machine over the man on the ground. The distance and lack of a common experience will lead to the belief that the operator could not possibly understand or appreciate the situation on the battlefield while sitting thousands of miles away in an air-conditioned trailer.[46] Arguably, the soldier or Marine would be exactly right.

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[44] *SECDEF/CJCS Senate Armed Service Committee Testimony regarding FY 2010 Budget Request*, Testimony as Delivered by Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates and Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, , Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 106, Washington, D.C. Thursday, May 14, 2009. http://www.jcs.mil/speech.aspx?ID=1182, (accessed 15 February 2009).
[45] Singer, *Wired for War*, 332.
[46] Singer, *Wired for War*, 337.

The Air Force warrior is becoming an endangered species. Technology has reduced the need for men and women to be exposed to danger and has made the difficult and repugnant act of killing both distant and impersonal. The move to create a technologically advanced, unmanned force is the apparent route the Air Force and its civilian masters have chosen. The moral ramifications of such a technologically reliant force are not yet known, and may not be known until it is too late to react. The future members of the Air Force will still have the requirement for the core values of integrity, service before self, and excellence in all they do; but fewer and fewer airmen will have the need for the character traits of bravery, valor, courage, and sacrifice under threat.

Chapter 3

The Institutional Air Force Warrior

Wars may be fought with weapons, but they are won by men.

- General George Patton Jr

War hath no fury like a non-combatant.

-Charles Edward Montague

Extending technology beyond the manned aircraft has yielded a plethora of new and innovative technologies with which the Air Force can employ firepower on the battlefield without placing a single service member at risk. This advanced technology creates a problem of perception, and as the saying goes—perception is reality. The perception among the sister services, particularly the Army and Marines, is that the Air Force is beholden to its machines and seeks a clean, sterile battle without the bloodshed seen in the historic land battles.[1] The impression is the Air Force prefers a war that can be won at the press of a button, without the need to send young men and women into harm's way—a war without fear, danger, or courage.

The Early Years

In the early days of flight, the pilot and other aircrew were considered the only warriors within the Army Air Corps. The early air theorist Major William C. Sherman observed, "When we come to consider the air fighters…the officer, not the enlisted man, is the wielder of arms in the air. The latter is not a combatant at all….He is not called upon, as the infantryman may be, to follow his officer forward in the charge, through the heated atmosphere of danger and death. The duties of the air service enlisted man are complex, but are performed under conditions of comparative safety."[2]

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[1] Carl H. Builder, *The Masks of War: American Military Styles in Strategy and Analysis*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1989, 18-30.

[2] William C. Sherman, Air *Warfare*, Reprint Edition, Maxwell AFB, AL: Air University Press, 2002, 11.

Similarly, the other highly regarded air theorist of the day, General William "Billy" Mitchell, espoused the need for a highly trained officer corps to fly the aircraft into battle. Mitchell emphasized how an air service needs trained airmen for leaders as only airmen understand the needs and requirements for an air service. Furthermore, he described the requisite enlisted personnel needed to sustain the force, with emphasis placed on the need for highly skilled mechanics, whose importance he rightly placed equal with that of the pilot.[3] Mitchell explicitly describes the differences between the warriors of the air service and those who fight on the ground: "The air man's psychology of war depends on the action of the individual, he has no man at his elbow to support him; no officers in front to lead him, and no file closers behind him to shoot him if he runs away as is the case in the ground army."[4]

These theoretical works on airpower were written in the mid 1920s. The early air theorists could not possibly have foreseen the paradigm-shifting technologies that the Air Force brings to the fight today. The perception of the early theorists that the air service warriors were those who flew was both prevalent and sensible. The pilots and aircrew were the only individuals who faced fear and danger while operating the only instrument the burgeoning air service used to deliver firepower to the enemy—the aircraft. Particularly since the end of World War II, technology has rapidly advanced and the means to deliver firepower from the air has dramatically changed. The Air Force reached a technological fork in the road as the original leaders of the Air Force, the pilots, found that the means by which to deliver airpower no longer necessarily required their services as missiles and unmanned systems gained prevalence.[5]

The Air Force's perpetual desire to seek new and innovative technology— the best fighter, the newest bomber, the most capable satellite, and so on—created a service that requires technicians and professionals to manage the complex, modern equipment. Follow-on equipment to replace aging systems is continually requested, and required. This technologically-fixated mindset and perpetual focus on the means of warfare rather than the ends created a cultural separation of the Air Force from the other services, a

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[3] William "Billy" Mitchell, *Winged Defense: The Development and Possibilities of Modern Air Power—Economic and Military*, The University of Alabama Press: Tuscaloosa, 2009, 159-180.
[4] Mitchell, *Winged Defense*, 160-161.
[5] Carl H. Builder, *The Icarus Syndrome: The Role of Air Power Theory in the Evolution and Fate of the U.S. Air Force*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, 1994, 27-37.

cultural separation in which the Air Force appears as a community of technicians and professionals who just happen occasionally to wage war.[6]

The Air Force has navigated a constant ebb and flow of institutional challenges. The changing of the leadership from bomber pilots, to fighter pilots, to the current Chief of Staff of the Air Force (CSAF), General Norton Schwartz, who has both an airlift and special operations background, speaks to the changing eras of airpower. From the heydays of Strategic Air Command in the 1950s and 1960s, to the post-Vietnam rise of the fighter generals and tactical airpower, to the current emphasis on special operations and other unique airpower capabilities, the image of the Air Force as an institution is a moving target.

Due to this ever-evolving set of capabilities and technologies, defining the Air Force warrior and articulating a warrior ethos for a service so technologically dexterous is daunting. To that end, the Air Force, as an institution, seeks to foster a warrior ethos and develop the mindset that all Airmen, no matter what their occupational specialty, are warriors. In an era in which deployments are numerous and irregular warfare threats are real, creating this mindset throughout the force appears both needed and rational. But is it institutionally and intellectually honest? Is the Airman sitting in a cubicle, officer or enlisted alike, a warrior in the mold of the soldier on a foot patrol in Afghanistan? Is the Airman who is rarely, if ever, at personal risk the warrior equivalent to the marine engaged in a firefight? Is the RPA operator who "pulls the trigger" thousands of miles from the frontline, but only a mere 10 minute drive from home, the same warrior as the sailors who faced the kamikaze onslaught at Leyte Gulf?

The intention behind the effort is commendable: to change the perception of the Air Force from merely a technically proficient group of professionals to a more aggressive military organization committed to the achievement of victory in war. However, as new and emergent technologies drive the operating personnel further from the battlefield, reducing, if not eliminating, all elements of physical danger and fear, the perception of the Air Force warrior, both within the Air Force and among sister services, is one that needs to be approached with intellectual honesty, not just emotional rhetoric.

[6] Builder, *The Icarus Syndrome*, 165-189.

Air Force Doctrine Document 1-1

The source document for the Air Force regarding the warrior and the warrior ethos is Air Force Doctrine Document (AFDD) 1-1, *Leadership and Force Development*. The forward, written by then CSAF General John Jumper, makes clear that AFDD 1-1 "is *the* Air Force statement of leadership principles and force development."[7] The very first chapter is dedicated to leadership. The opening quote of the chapter, also from General Jumper, unequivocally states, "Our warriors are no longer limited to the people who fly airplanes….Our entire force is a warrior force. Being a warrior is not an AFSC (Air Force specialty code)…it's a condition of the heart."[8] This sweeping statement sets the condition upon which all training regarding the warrior and the warrior ethos, enlisted and officer, is based.

Also within the first chapter of AFDD 1-1 are the official definitions of an Airman and the warrior ethos. An Airman is defined as "any US Air Force member (officer or enlisted; active, reserve, or guard; and Department of the Air Force civilians) who supports and defends the US Constitution and serves our country. An Airman understands the potential of air and space power."[9] The warrior ethos is subsequently described as, "tough-mindedness, tireless motivation, an unceasing vigilance, and a willingness by the military members to sacrifice their own lives for their country if necessary. Air Force Airmen, military and civilian, are committed to being the world's premier air and space force."[10] The rest of the chapter describes in detail the Air Force core values—considered traits of the warrior ethos—of integrity, service before self, and excellence.

As the youngest service, and the service whose capabilities revolve predominantly around technology rather than human exertion, for the Air Force to describe all of its members as warriors is problematic. Moreover, simply having the CSAF issue a blanket statement that all Airmen are warriors and codifying it in both doctrine and creed does not make it so.

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[7] Air Force Doctrine Document 1-1, *Leadership and Force Development*, 18 Feb 2006, iii.
[8] AFDD 1-1, *Leadership and Force Development*, 1.
[9] AFDD 1-1, *Leadership and Force Development*, 2.
[10] AFDD 1-1, *Leadership and Force Development*, 2.

Enlisted Basic Military Training

Perhaps the greatest effort placed into inculcating the warrior ethos and propagating the impression that all Airmen are warriors occurs in Basic Military Training (BMT) for all incoming enlisted personnel. Often, BMT is where such ethos training is needed most as the incoming personnel are frequently just out of high school and must quickly understand that the military is different from the rest of society's occupations and professions.

BMT is the primary introduction to military life for thousands of young individuals each year. This experience is their first true taste of military life and the prime opportunity to mold and shape these young adults into Airmen. In order to accomplish this task, trainees receive many hours of academic instruction in addition to their physical training. The warrior and the warrior ethos are taught within a block of instruction entitled War Skills and Military Studies.[11] The entire block of studies has the following classes:

(1) Mental Preparation for Combat (1.5 Hrs)
(2) Basic Situational Awareness/Pugil Stick Application (3 Hrs)
(3) Warrior Role (1 Hr)
(4) Combat Stress Recovery (1 Hr)
(5) TEMPER (Tent, Extendable Modular Personnel) Tents (2 Hrs)[12]

The first block of instruction, Mental Preparation for Combat, provides an excellent introduction into the realities of war. The instructor informs the trainees on the intensity of combat, placing an emphasis on its noise and brutality, as well as how one must be prepared mentally, physically, and spiritually for combat. A further area of instruction teaches the emotions one can expect in combat, including both anger and fear. Furthermore, trainees receive a discussion on the resultant physical manifestations of fear and how to recognize and overcome them.[13] Overall, this block of instruction provides essential information and a hefty dose of honest reality to the new trainee.

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[11] BMT Course Management Plan 8.5 Week Program FY 2010, Provided by Nancy E. Conley, Chief Training Development Flight, 737 Training Support Squadron, Lackland AFB, TX.
[12] USAF BMT, *War Skills and Military Studies: Combat Readiness*, Lesson POI No. LMABM9T000 00AB, Block II, Unit 15, 4 May 2009.
[13] Department of the Air Force, Lesson Plan BMT, *Mental Preparation for Combat*, Lesson POI No. LMABM9T000 00AB, Block II, Unit 15, 4 May 2009.

The third block of instruction, the Warrior Role is the primary academic introduction to the trainees on the institutional dictum that all Airmen are warriors. This lesson plan discusses the historic perception of a warrior, the glorified knight of the past, and plainly states that a warrior is also "The Airman who quietly does his duty day after day in service to his country, the wingmen to your right and left, [and] the person you see starring back at you in the mirror every morning."[14] The lesson plan also defines warriors as people "able to sacrifice their lives in defense of their country, freedoms, family, friends and fellow citizens. [This] includes everyone that shares the same way of thinking, character or guiding beliefs (also known as ethos) and who are willing to take the following actions: a. Face adversity head on, b. Do what is right, [and] c. Protect others."[15] The lesson culminates with the instruction that the members of the armed services are warriors not because of anything they have done, but merely because they have sworn an oath to defend the Constitution of the United States and commit their lives to the defense of the nation. The first portion of the lesson on defining the warrior clearly and unequivocally states that "regardless of your career field, remember that you are a warrior first!"[16]

The lesson proceeds from a definition of who is a warrior to a very poignant description of a warrior ethos and an introduction to the Airman's Creed, which the lesson defines as the enunciation of the Air Force warrior ethos. The instruction informs the trainees that the warrior ethos is at the foundation of what it means to be an Airman. The ethos defines the hardiness of spirit and both the moral and physical courage that every Airman must possess. The guidance on the core values of the Air Force, given the name "warrior values" in the lesson, provides an outstanding accounting of integrity, service before self, and excellence, and relates each of these to the warrior ethos.[17]

The final portion of the Warrior Role lesson describes how the trainees will become warriors through the upcoming military training. Noting that not all individuals are innately blessed with the skills and talents needed for combat, they are informed that the training will enable them to develop the requisite warrior skills and capabilities.

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[14] Department of the Air Force, Lesson Plan BMT, *Warrior Role*, Lesson POI No. LMABM9T000 00AB, Block II, Unit 15, 4 May 2009, 2.
[15] Lesson Plan USAF BMT, *Warrior Role*, 2-3.
[16] Lesson Plan USAF BMT, *Warrior Role*, 3.
[17] Lesson Plan USAF BMT, *Warrior Role*, 3-7.

Instruction on the essential characteristics of discipline and self-confidence in order to become a warrior is also given. In addition, the lesson states one must practice and hone these skills in order to become a better warrior. A description of the various types of combat training they receive during BMT concludes the lesson.[18]

This last section of the lesson appears rather misleading. In the first section of the Warrior Role lesson, every Airman is defined as a warrior by the simple act of raising a hand and taking an oath. Yet, in the last section, in order to become a warrior, training is required. Which is it? Either they are warriors for taking an oath or they need training to become a warrior. Are there now different levels of warriors—the ones who have only taken the oath and, depending on what level of training received, more important or better warriors? Does this mean that those who receive the greatest amount of training in the techniques of engaging in combat (aircrew, special forces, JTACs, etc…) are the "top warriors" in the Air Force? By stating every Airman is a warrior, but then adding that one needs training to become a warrior, the Air Force is caught in a verbal trap of its own making.

The indoctrination and education of the Air Force's newest Airmen needs to be rigorous and challenging. The BMT instructors continually strive to produce young Airmen of the highest caliber. The high-tech occupations of the Air Force require mentally sharp, professionally astute, and morally sound Airmen to keep the United States Air Force as the world's preeminent air, space, and cyberspace power. However, the push to instill the notion that all Airmen are warriors may be done for a myriad of reasons; one of the primary reasons is to combat the Air Force's persistent insecurity in being perceived as a force that is less than rugged, a force that uses technology to fight at a distance. Even former CSAF General T. Michael Moseley, in introducing the Airman's Creed, hinted at this insecurity by admitting the Air Force has a "unique warfighting perspective" with technology at the forefront, and that as the youngest service our founders left a spirit that "fosters initiative, innovation, and forward thinking."[19] Moseley attempts to combat any less-than-rugged Air Force stereotype by stating, "We must never forget that our Air Force isn't just a conglomeration of diverse specialties,

[18] Lesson Plan USAF BMT, *Warrior Role*, 7-9.
[19] General T. Michael Moseley, "CSAF presents Airman's Creed," *Air Force Print News*, 25 April, 2007.

skill sets, or jobs. Ours is the profession of arms. We are Airmen Warriors…. As Airmen, we wage and win our Nation's wars, all the while fulfilling invaluable and unique roles and missions in peace, crisis and war. As Airmen, we build on our rich combat heritage while reaching toward an infinite horizon. And, as Airmen, we fly, fight and win. Don't you ever forget it!"[20]

This motivational discourse, combined with the introduction to the Airman's Creed, reaffirms the perceived technologically-reliant institutional character of the Air Force. Yet, it also gives the perception that the Air Force is not nearly as aggressively focused on warfighting as an armed force should be.

Perhaps the most clearly expressed manifestation of this institutional insecurity comes from an interview with a BMT instructor who states, "We are trying to change the mindset that our trainees have coming in….They have the impression that we are a chair force. We are trying to change that assumption and show them that we are warriors, *just like the rest of the services* [emphasis added]."[21]

Officer Commissioning Sources and the Air and Space Basic Course

Each of the officer commissioning sources, United States Air Force Academy (USAFA), Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), and the Air Force Officer Training School (OTS), have similar educational programs regarding the Air Force warrior and the warrior ethos. All of the lesson plans from each of these commissioning sources have essentially the same goal, which is to proclaim the warrior ethos according to AFDD 1-1 and to make a connection to the student's heart and mind about the need for a warrior ethos.

Cadets at the USAFA receive a lesson on warrior ethos only once during their sophomore year. Much like the BMT lesson, this lesson places great emphasis on the notion that all Airmen are warriors. In addition, the reality that all occupations within the Air Force may be called on to deploy in nontraditional roles that may increase the

[20] Moseley, "CSAF presents Airman's Creed,"1.
[21] SSgt Matther Rosine, "Airmen live, learn warrior ethos," *Air Force News Agency*, 9 May 2007, found at http://www.af.mil/news/story_print.asp?id=123052587, (accessed 5 November 2009).

likelihood of being exposed to, or engaging in, combat is emphasized.[22] The lesson proceeds to take a quantum leap and states that because of the increased likelihood of being exposed to danger, all Airmen are warriors "just as important as the flyers dropping bombs on target."[23] The lesson continues with a discussion on three characteristics that make up the warrior ethos—hardiness of spirit, moral courage, and physical courage—as well as the need for incorporating the key attributes espoused in the Airman's Creed.[24] The lesson concludes with a guest speaker who was unwittingly caught in a firefight and suffered a wound while serving in Iraq, emphasizing that all Air Force occupations could be exposed to danger while at deployed locations.

The OTS curriculum is nearly identical in content. Once again, the emphasis is on the idea that all Airmen are warriors and the need for each service member to have the warrior ethos as defined in AFDD 1-1. It is interesting to note the examples of Air Force warriors used in the OTS curriculum are an F-4C pilot and Medal of Honor recipient, an A-10 pilot, a Combat Search and Rescue team member during Somalia operations, and a pararescueman killed in 2002 during Operation Anaconda.[25] Each and every one of the warrior examples are individuals whose primary task or function was to face fear and danger to engage the enemy in combat on, or above, the field of battle.

Once again, the ROTC lessons on the warrior, the warrior ethos, and the Air force Core Values mimic the other commissioning source programs. According to a current Commandant of Cadets of an ROTC unit, infusing the warrior ethos is the primary focus of his (or her) particular unit.[26] Various methods are used to perpetuate the warrior ethos beyond the classroom lessons, to include applying lessons during physical training, drill and formation, and while leading fellow cadets during mundane activities or in a physically challenging environment.

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[22] Department of the Air Force, *United States Air Force Academy Cadet Commissioning Program Lesson Plan, Lesson 201060000: Warrior Ethos*, original 11 April 2007, Updated 18 Sept 2009, 4.
[23] Department of the Air Force, *USAFA Lesson: Warrior Ethos*, 5.
[24] Department of the Air Force, *USAFA Lesson: Warrior Ethos*, 6-7.
[25] Department of the Air Force, United States Officer Training School Curriculum, Lesson PA-8, *Profession of Arms: The Airman's Creed and Code of Conduct*, July 2009, 1-7.
[26] Email conversations with Captain Brian Doyle, Commandant of Cadets, Air Force ROTC Detachment 017, Troy University, AL provided great insight from an instructors point of view on how they stress the warrior ethos to each of their cadets. Captain Doyle also graciously provided the author with the Air Force Core Values Lesson, in addition to the Detachment 017 Spring Semester 2010 Operations Plan.

Each Lieutenant in the Air Force receives further professional military education relatively soon after commissioning at the Air and Space Basic Course (ASBC). This program is the first step of many educational experiences the Air Force offers. In this course, a lesson on the Foundations of Officership provides a review of the Airman's Creed, the warrior ethos, and the core values of the Air Force.[27] No truly new information is presented, but the officers are able to discuss and apply the Airman's Creed, the warrior ethos, and the core values through the prism of their short experience as commissioned officers in the Air Force.

The commissioning sources in the Air Force, as well as ASBC, closely mirror the instruction given at BMT; placing emphasis on the concept that every Airman is a warrior no matter what his or her occupation is within the Air Force, and that every Airman needs to live the ideals and virtues of a warrior ethos. The laudable intention behind this indoctrination is to instill a more rigorous and warrior-centric mindset. As a result, the Air Force dilutes the meaning of a warrior to the politically correct, all-inclusive definition of "We are all warriors" as a means to soothe both institutional and individual sensitivities.

Reinforced from the Top

On April 25, 2007, CSAF General Moseley introduced the Airman's Creed. In announcing the new creed, Moseley states all Airmen are warriors and articulates his desire to reinvigorate a warrior ethos within the force. He subsequently defined the warrior ethos as "the warfighting-focused culture, conviction, character, ethic, mindset, spirit and soul we foster in all Airmen. It's the pride in our heritage, the recognition that our Nation depends on us to dominate air, space, and cyberspace, and our willing acceptance of the burden of those immense responsibilities. We're duty-bound to imbue our newest Airmen with these warrior values during basic training and foster them throughout every Airman's career."[28] Moseley concludes the instauration of the

[27] Department of the Air Force, Air and Space Basic Course, AP-5200 Lesson Plan: *Foundations of Officership*, 24 Nov 2009.
[28] Moseley, "CSAF presents Airman's Creed," 1.

Airman's Creed with an exhortation for all Airmen to get "in position immediately" behind the Creed and its content.[29]

The current CSAF, General Norton Schwartz, continues to emphasize the need for a warrior ethos and the concept that all Airmen are warriors.[30] In a *CSAF's Vector* entitled "Fly, Fight, and Win!" Schwartz stresses the core values, Air Force heritage, and the need for a "warfighting ethos and expeditionary mindset."[31] Schwartz communicates the need to adjust the force to fight in the current wars as well as prepare for any emerging foe. He concludes by accentuating the facts that all Airmen are important and each specialty is critical.[32]

Schwartz gave a subsequent speech on warrior ethos at a United States Air Force Weapons School graduation. Due to the highly selective nature of the application process, the extensive training required prior to Weapons School, and the nature of the grueling course, graduates of the Weapons School are considered to be at the top of the warrior pyramid. In this speech, Schwartz again emphasized the need for each Air Force specialty to exemplify the warrior ethos, with a particular emphasis on stewardship.[33]

Schwartz gave another speech with reference to both the warrior and warrior ethos, this time to a group of RPA operators. This was not a typical group of RPA operators; this was the graduation ceremony for the first "Beta Test" class. This "Beta Test" class was the first group of RPA operators that did not require prior aviation training of any kind in order to control an RPA. Despite being a group of individuals who never "slipped the surly bonds of earth" (nor will they be required to expose themselves to danger as they operate RPAs from hundreds, if not thousands, of miles from any danger), Schwartz claimed they were the "next generation of Air Force warrior-professionals."[34] Later in same the speech, Schwartz reissued warrior credentials upon these new RPA operators declaring them to be a "new group of Airmen-warriors."[35]

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[29] Moseley, "CSAF presents Airman's Creed," 2.
[30] SSgt Rachel Martinez, "General Schwartz tours Bagram, addresses Airmen's questions," *Air Force Print News*, 23 October, 2008.
[31] General Norton Schwartz, "Fly, Fight, and Win!" *CSAF's Vector*, 3 September 2008, 1.
[32] Schwartz, "Fly, Fight, and Win!" 2.
[33] General Norton Schwartz, "A Misty Memory," Weapons School Graduation Remarks, 13 December 2008, 1-3.
[34] General Norton Schwartz, "The Future of Unmanned Systems: UAS "Beta Test" Graduation," 25 September, 2009, 1.
[35] Schwartz, "The Future of Unmanned Systems," 5.

Between the Weapons School graduation speech and the "Beta Test" graduation speech, the dilution of the Air Force warrior is complete, and never more profound. On one end are the preeminent warriors in the Air Force, those who have spent years perfecting their dangerous and deadly warrior trade. On the other are individuals who will wield death and destruction from afar; never having to face danger or fear on a battlefield. Rarely has a caste been more diminished by comparison.

Lowering the Bar

The intensity with which the current and former CSAFs profess the need for a warrior ethos within the Air Force is right on target. The Air Force is a military arm of the United States and its members must adhere to an expected code of conduct and behavior that the warrior ethos, as expressed in AFDD 1-1, delineates. The nation expects nothing less from those who are given such great responsibility.

Being an individual who adheres to a warrior ethos, however, does not make one a warrior. The warrior and the warrior ethos are two separate entities. The warrior is the person and the warrior ethos is the character of a person. One cannot be a warrior without the warrior ethos, but one can have and live the warrior ethos and not be a warrior. By claiming all that needs to occur to become a warrior is simply to take an oath, the Air Force diminishes the concept and status of the warrior.

Stressing the importance of abiding to a warrior ethos in order to forge a service built on honor and integrity is paramount, considering the destructive capabilities the Air Force is able to wield in the nation's security interests. In order for the Air Force to achieve success in its assigned missions, every Airman must perform his or her task with an expected level of professionalism. Yet, this does not make every Airman a warrior.

To illustrate this point, envision the Air Force as a professional football organization. The name of the team is the Strikers. In order to be successful, the Striker organization must adhere to a professional ethic in every aspect of its operations. This includes a dedication to do things such as pay bills and contracts, properly maintain the facilities, scout opponent's capabilities, create game plans, and have athletes train physically and mentally for the season ahead, just to name a few. While all members of the entire Striker organization have the same goal and dedication to victory, each member

of the organization has a different, yet essential, task. Without every member performing their particular function, down to the team bus driver, the Strikers will not be successful.

Now imagine if employees of the organization felt slighted because they perceived themselves as less important than the running backs. They realize running backs receive greater pay and compensation, more press coverage, and adulation and attention from the fans. The Strikers' owner, in order to provide emotional sanctuary for the feelings of every employee, therefore announces all members of the organization will now carry the title of running back. Each employee, after signing a contract, is given the title of running back without having to perform the running back's job, do the continual intense training, or face the opponent on the field of play. The owner's actions would be considered ludicrous and politically correct to the extreme. Not only would this be intellectually dishonest, it would subsequently diminish the position and stature of the running back, but also imply that every position within the Striker organization is not as valuable as the running back.

What the Air Force is attempting to do by claiming every Airman is a warrior is identical to the misguided efforts of this team owner. By declaring every Airman is a warrior upon the completion of an oath reduces the meaning and the significance of being a warrior to only a mere recitation of words. In the football example, pride must be placed in being a member of the Strikers, not on a particular position. Similarly, the Air Force should instill individual pride in being an Airman, accentuating that each is an integral member of the most elite, professional, and feared air power in the world. Just as every member of the fictional Strikers football team is not a running back, every member of the Air Force is not a warrior. However, each task of the organization is vital to success and requires the same dedicated and professional work ethic. In the Air Force, that ethic is the warrior ethos.

The following chapter details the reasons the Air Force must disassociate itself from the notion that every Airman is a warrior. To pretend that every Airman is a warrior is intellectually dishonest and undermines the Air Force's credibility among its sister services. This institutional rhetoric also runs contrary, ironically, to the Air Force core value of "Integrity First." The Air Force would do well to step back from the mentality that it must declare all of its members are warriors. Rather, the Air Force should

acknowledge that its capabilities enable airmen to perform missions, either independently or as vital members in the joint fight.

Chapter 4

Appraising the Air Force Warrior

To be a warrior is not a simple matter of wishing to be one. It is rather an endless struggle that will go on to the very last moment of our lives. Nobody is born a warrior, in exactly the same way that nobody is born an average man. We make ourselves into one or the other.

- Carlos Castaneda

The development of a rational approach to innovation cannot supplant an uncritical willingness to face danger—the essence of the martial spirit.

- Morris Janowitz

The number of medals on an officer's breast varies in inverse proportion to the square of the distance of his duties from the front line.

-Charles Edward Montague

The institutional character of the Air Force evolved as technology advanced from air to the realms of space and cyberspace. Gone are the days when piloted aircraft were the only means available to employ firepower against the enemy. The advent of RPAs, ICBMs, satellites, and standoff weapons such as Air-Launched Cruise Missiles changed the very nature of the service and how early airpower advocates envisioned air combat. The Air Force warrior is a victim of this rapidly expanding technology. The Air Force warrior did not choose this demise; rather, technology replaced the need for warriors in the Air Force. Employing airpower from dozens to thousands of miles away at the push of a button insulates many Airmen from the cruelties and danger of war, while simultaneously creating tremendous advantages on the battlefield. Yet this same technology, by generating extensive physical and emotional distance from the enemy, eliminates the exposure to the moral factors of war—fear, danger, and courage—adding complexity and moral ambiguity to the system operators. Though technology alters the battlefield by reducing, or eliminating, contact with the moral forces of war, the Air Force should not correspondingly set a course to alter the historic and traditional definition of a warrior to include all members of the Air Force by default.

Embrace Honesty…and Technology

Since the earliest days of warfare, it is evident the warrior has been the fighter, the one who engages in combat and subscribes to a warrior ethos. The warrior is the individual who carries the fight to the enemy, whether in Ancient Greece, the Middle Ages, or the current day. The warrior garners the courage to overcome physical danger and accomplish the task at hand. In times past, determining who was a warrior was relatively simple, as combat took place on a defined field of battle on the ground. The antagonists were in eyesight of one another and almost everyone incurred an inherent level of physical risk. Technology altered the traditional battlefield. No longer does an operator have to assume risk to employ weapons. Nevertheless, this does not imply that as technology evolves, the characteristics defining a warrior must adjust to fit the technology. To the contrary, advancing technology that removes human interaction and the moral factors of war on the battlefield serves only to reduce the need for warriors and increase the need for technologists, operators, and managers.

Morris Janowitz, in his acclaimed work *The Professional Soldier*, states that the officer corps is composed of three types of individuals: the heroic leader, the military manager, and the military technologist. The heroic leader represents the traditional warrior within the military and "embodies the martial spirit and the theme of personal valor."[1] In contrast, the military manager concentrates on the scientific and more pragmatic dimensions of war-making, such as logistical mobilization.[2]

> *Military Managers—in the ground, air, and naval forces—are aware that they direct combat organizations. They consider themselves to be brave men, prepared to face danger. But they are mainly concerned with the most rational and economic ways of winning wars or avoiding them….Heroic leaders, in turn, claim that they have the proper formula for the conduct of war. They would deny that they are anti-technological. But for them the heroic traditions of fighting men, which can only be preserved by military honor, military tradition, and the military way of life, are crucial.*[3]

[1] Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait*, The Free Press: USA, 1960, 21.
[2] Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier*, 21.
[3] Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier*, 35.

The modern American military tradition is a struggle between the heroic leaders and the military managers.[4] Janowitz contends that military managers must control the military establishment in order for it to be successful, but that the establishment must also maintain a level of heroic leaders at the upper echelons of leadership to retain the fighting spirit, a spirit grounded in a psychological motive to seek success in combat without regard for personal safety.[5]

The third type of individual, the military technologist, is a recent addition to the military corps. Nuclear warfare, guided missiles, and other technology spawned the technologist. The military technologist, however, is "not a scientist, or for that matter an engineer; basically, he is a military manager, with a fund of technical knowledge and a quality for dramatizing the need for technological progress."[6]

All three types of officers described by Janowitz are needed for an organization as technologically-centric as the Air Force to be successful. Still, an overemphasis on management and an overreliance and devout enthrallment with technology, among other factors, has led to an erosion of the traditional Air Force heroic leaders and subsequent decline of the warrior spirit they represent.[7]

Technology is the prime culprit for the heroic leader's demise. By substituting machines for humans wherever possible, it is easy to lose sight of the individuals who must still operate many of these machines in the intense heat of battle. This is not a new phenomenon. As early as 1947, the renowned US Army historian S.L.A. Marshall noted Americans were already forgetting the men who won World War II, stating, "We have come through another great war and its reality is already cloaked in the mists of peace. In the course of that war, we learned anew that man is supreme, that it is the soldier who fights and wins battles, that fighting means using a weapon, and that it is the heart of man which controls this use. That lesson we are already at the point of forgetting. We can ill

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[4] Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier*, 21. A further historical examination of the battle between heroic leaders and military managers is also found in Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1957, 193, 195, 200-203, 211-221, 226-237, 255-256.
[5] Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier*, 31-36.
[6] Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier*, 164.
[7] Lt Col Donald R. Baucom, *The Professional Soldier and the Warrior Spirit,* Strategic Review, Fall 1985, 58.

afford it."[8] Given the technologically dominating performances by the Air Force against America's foes in the decades since Marshall's observation, we are on the verge of forgetting this lesson once again.

Technology, particularly in the Air Force, can reduce human operators to drones, simply conveying instructions from one computer to another, far away from the battlefield and in complete safety. Therefore, the heroic leader and the traditional fighting man become unnecessary in this method of warfare. The resulting impact on the Air Force is the rise of the military managers and military technologists who are responsible for procuring, employing, and maintaining the advanced technologies. The heroic leaders, and the subsequent fighting spirit they provide, diminish.[9]

Indoctrinating the false claim that all Airmen are warriors—essentially painting the military manager, technologist, and all other Airmen with the brush of the heroic leader—the Air Force effectively terminates the existence of the heroic leader. The Air Force has plenty of heroic leaders and warriors in its midst, but not every Airman is a heroic leader, and not every Airman is a warrior. The Air Force would do well to embrace honesty both in its creed and in its teaching of who is an Air Force warrior.

A candid and straightforward assessment of how the Air Force fights and how it employs technology on the battlefield illustrates that the Air Force is a service heavily dominated by military managers and military technologists, and technology has made the heroic Air Force warrior a dying breed. Due to institutional insecurity with the perception of being a highly technological force with few heroic leaders, the Air Force is attempting to assimilate the image of the military manager and the military technologist into a heroic leader equivalent. This attempt misplaces the focus on what should produce pride in the Air Force—namely the ability to innovate new means to achieve the desired political and military effects while placing fewer lives at risk. The service's self-esteem should not come from the false notion all Airmen are warriors "just like the other services;"[10] rather, pride comes in being an Airman in the world's foremost air force.

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[8] S.L.A. Marshall, *Men Against Fire: The Problem of Battle Command in Future War*, William Morrow and Company, New York, 1947, 23.
[9] Baucom, *The Professional Soldier and the Warrior Spirit*, 62.
[10] SSgt Matther Rosine, "Airmen live, learn warrior ethos," *Air Force News Agency*, 9 May 2007, found at http://www.af.mil/news/story_print.asp?id=123052587, (accessed 5 November 2009).

The realms in which the Air Force operates—air, space, and cyberspace—require technological solutions since humans obviously cannot operate in any of these realms without the aid of technology. The Air Force is, at its very core, a technologically-centric force composed of avid technophiles. This is nothing to be ashamed of; rather, it should be a source of pride, honoring the ingenuity and mental acumen of those that serve in the Air Force. Even the leaders of the Army Air Corps in World War II, and the founders of the Air Force, took pride in the use and development of technology and envisioned a force filled more with technicians than warriors. "It is worth noting that [Hap] Arnold and Lt. Gen. Ira C. Eaker, Deputy Commander, AAF, and other air leaders, possessed a firm vision of the future. 'We believe,' observed Eaker in June 1947, 'that the Air Force stands at the threshold of a new era. Whereas in the past it has been largely a corps of flying men, in the future, certainly, ten to fifteen years from now, it will be more nearly a corps of technicians and scientists.'"[11]

The founders of the Air Force realized that technology was the future for the Air Force. Considering where it fights, it has to be. The Air Force needs to embrace technology fully, and simultaneously embrace honesty and truthfully answer the question, "Are we all warriors?" No. However, we are all Airmen—gifted in the ability to apply airpower to meet the nation's needs.

A More Honest Definition

An underlying issue in this thesis is the importance of words. Words convey connotations and meanings to which everyone responds, either positively or negatively. In addition, words are an indication of a thought pattern the institution wishes to convey. The traditional connotation of the word "warrior" is of an individual risking physical harm and confronting danger in order to defend and protect the nation while ascribing to a warrior ethos. The connotation of the word "warrior" that the Air Force currently espouses is that a warrior is anyone who simply takes an oath—a heavily diluted connotation and demonstrable misuse of the term.

[11] H.H. Arnold, as quoted in Herman S. Wolk, "Planning and Organizing the Air Force," *Aerospace Historian*, (Fall, September 1987), 174.

AFDD 1-1 provides a number of laudable concepts in its discussion of the warrior ethos. It emphasizes the fact that "regardless of duty location, occupational specialty, or job position, all Airmen must embody the warrior ethos."[12] The warrior ethos described in AFDD 1-1, in combination with its excellent portrayal of the Air Force core values, provides the ethical framework, the warrior ethos, to which each and every Airman must adhere. While expressing the warrior ethos and core values, AFDD 1-1 opens with a quote from General Jumper which states, "Our entire force is a warrior force. Being a warrior is not an AFSC,…it's a condition of the heart."[13] With all due respect to the former CSAF, the entire Air Force is not a warrior force, nor is being a warrior only a condition of the heart.

The Air Force is made of various types of Airmen. Of these Airmen, many are military managers, military technologists, or they provide aid and support to those that must engage in combat. To illustrate it metaphorically, Airpower is often referred to as a spear with the sharp end being the strike systems and the shaft of the spear being the support systems. The sharp end is currently getting sharper and more accurate as technology evolves; meanwhile, the shaft of the spear is growing as the required technological support increases.[14] However, they are still two separate ends of the same spear. The shaft is never the point, and vice-versa. This does not take away the necessity of each end, for without the point, the spear is just a large stick; and without the shaft of the spear, the point is directionless and lacks both force and momentum.

Keeping faith with the origins, tradition, and history of the warrior, and recognizing the significance of the moral factors of war, an intellectually honest definition for the Air Force Warrior, the Airman at the tip of the spear, is

> Air Force Warrior: An Airman whose *primary* task or function for which he or she trains is, or was, to engage the enemy in combat, and/or who purposefully, deliberately, and persistently risks being engaged by the enemy in combat. An Air Force warrior requires both physical and moral courage in the completion of his or her primary task or function and adheres to a warrior ethos.

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[12] Air Force Doctrine Document 1-1, *Leadership and Force Development*, 18 Feb 2006, 2.
[13] AFDD 1-1. *Leadership and Force Development*, 1.
[14] Carl H. Builder, *The Icarus Syndrome: The Role of Air Power Theory in the Evolution and Fate of the U.S. Air Force*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, 1994, 263-264.

In the same vein, a subsequent definition of an Air Force Operator should provide for its affiliation with advanced technology that separates the operator from the battlefield.

> Air Force Operator: An Airman whose *primary* task or function for which he or she trains is, or was, to engage the enemy in combat without intentional exposure to physical risk. An Air Force Operator requires moral courage in the completion of his or her primary task or function and adheres to a warrior ethos.

The main difference between the definition of the warrior and the operator is the physical risk and the resultant exposure to the moral forces of war. Whereas the warrior must risk physical injury or death, requiring the ability to overcome fear and danger, the operator performs their function in relative safety, if not completely removed from all physical danger. The intimate exposure to the moral forces of war creates a chasm that separates the experiences, training, struggles, and anxieties each one faces. Although each engages the enemy in differing ways, each embody separate and distinct qualities and characteristics of their own.

The warrior ethos binds these two definitions together. Just as the warrior needs to subscribe to a warrior ethos to avoid becoming indistinguishable from the mercenary or a murderer, the Air Force operator needs to abide by the warrior ethos as well, if not more so. The destructive killing power available to the operator, without risk of being injured, and the great physical and emotional distance between the operator and the enemy generated by advanced technology create the moral necessity for the adherence to the warrior ethos. The warrior ethos prevents the operator from becoming a mindless, insensate manager of violence. The Air Force has done well to recognize that, though operators face minimal physical risk, the emotional risks and moral issues associated with killing at a distance need to be understood and addressed.[15]

In spite of the corresponding necessity for the warrior and the operator to abide by a warrior ethos, the operator is not a warrior equivalent. The realms in which they operate do not reside in the same emotional and physical spheres. The exposure to the moral forces of war and the physical and emotional ramifications therein separate the

[15] Scott Lindlaw, "UAV Operators Suffer War Stress," *Air Force Times*, The Associated Press, 8 August 2008, found at http://www.airforcetimes.com/news/2008/08/ap_remote_stress_080708/, (accessed 22 Dec 2009).

operator from the warrior. Ignoring the physical stresses the warrior faces perpetuates the fallacy of equating the operator and the warrior.

There are many warriors within the Air Force beyond the traditional pilots and aircrew members. Considering the requirements of the definition listed above, many Air Force specialties deserve warrior status: Joint Terminal Air Controllers (JTAC), Pararescueman (PJ), Special Forces, Security Forces, Explosive Ordnance Disposal, and the list continues. The primary task or function of these specialties is to physically engage or close with the enemy, requiring the ability to overcome fear and danger, while maintaining a warrior ethos. Security Forces perform this function on a daily basis so other Airmen within the base can perform their supporting functions, as the early theorist William C. Sherman aptly stated, "under conditions of comparative safety."[16]

The word "primary" in the definition of the warrior delineates the purposeful warrior from the accidental combatant. The Air Force provides a basic level of training in warrior skills to all Airmen. With the high probability of deploying to austere locations, these skills may be required in an emergency, for example a terrorist attack on a typically secure air base. Despite the fact that every Airman is taught a basic level of warrior skills, this does not make every Airman a warrior. Similarly, receiving recurring Self-Aid Buddy Care/First Aid training does not make one a doctor but enables one to perform emergency medical functions until the trained professionals arrive. Likewise, recurring Law of Armed Conflict training does not make one a lawyer. Knowing and performing a basic warrior skill, therefore, does not make one a warrior. Basic warrior skills simply make one able to perform basic survival functions in an emergency until the trained warriors who purposefully rush to the scene of danger arrive. Being in physical danger by accident or through uncontrollable circumstances does not equate one to the warriors whose sole function is intentionally to place himself, or herself, at risk. Stating any potential danger, no matter how remote or unlikely, from enemy action while deployed or at home station is to seek the lowest common denominator. True, an emergency situation may require the Airman to face fleeting danger and exhibit

[16] William C. Sherman, *Air Warfare*, Reprint Edition, Maxwell AFB, AL: Air University Press, 2002, 11. In addition, a recent example of how Security Forces face physical danger on a daily basis is found at, Gannett News Service, "1 Dead, 1 Wounded in Shooting at Luke," 23 Feb 2010, found at http://www.airforcetimes.com/news/2010/02/gns_airforce_luke_shooting_022310, (accessed 24 Feb 2010).

momentary courage; however, an unintended situation or scenario of fate is not equivalent to the warrior's willful, persistent exposure to danger and risk.

Within the definition of the warrior, the phrase "is, or was," is inserted to reinforce that once one has been trained for the primary task as a warrior and accepted the resultant physical and moral implications of said training, one is always a warrior. Simply because one is no longer in a position in which the abundance of warrior skills are currently required, the warrior mind-set, training, and experiences still linger. This is similar to many other professions. In the aforementioned football example, once the running back is trained and is on the team, he is not only a running back while he is in the game; rather, even when temporarily sidelined or after retirement, he is, and was, a running back for the team whether on or off the field of play. The same holds true for the warrior.

One can rightly argue that numerous other Airmen who may face great physical risk—but who's primary task or function does not engage, or risk being engaged, in combat—exist within the Air Force. One obvious example is a fireman. Certainly, these individuals face enormous physical risk, and possibly mortal danger in the performance of their tasks; but the historic and traditional warrior engages in combat and must deal with the mental and moral anguish of killing a fellow human, or risk being killed in combat. These individuals have an exceptionally close relationship with the warrior, closer than the operator does. The only thing that separates these individuals from the warrior is the intense moral qualm of killing with which the warrior must personally wrestle.

A multitude of contentions can be made as to whether specific specialties within the Air Force fall within the definition of the warrior. It is clear that some will and others will not. Some Air Force occupations lie within the operator category, while others may be managers, technologists, or form a separate category of their own. Debating the many shades of gray is not the goal of this thesis. Yet, through the discussion on the moral factors of war, the effects of technology, and the historic and traditional definition of the warrior, it is certain that while shades of gray may exist for a few specialties, there is also a distinctive fact in black and white: not all Airmen are warriors.

Within this discussion of who is the Air Force warrior, what must be rejected is the creation of a hierarchical level of importance placed on any category or specialty of Airman. Society consistently raises the stature of the warrior above all others within the military. Within aviation history, during World War II, pilots who achieved "ace" status or bomber crews who completed enough missions often were removed from combat duty and were paraded in front of the public in order to help drum up support on the home front. The plethora of successful war movies, typically glorifying a warrior occupation, is a testament to society's continued intrigue and fascination with the trials and tribulations of the warrior. This societal desire to elevate the warrior consequently creates the institutional need for every Airman to be labeled a warrior in order to assure that the personal importance of every Airman is on par with the warrior. This lies at the core of the institutional insecurity of the Air Force. It must be pronounced and taught with authority and conviction that each and every Airman is required in order for the Air Force to complete its assigned missions. Much like a chain, each link is vital; however, each link is separate and distinct. Some links are military managers, others are military technologists, operators, or warriors, and still others provide support to each of the varying capabilities the Air Force provides. The importance is not on each individual link, but rather the strength of the entire chain. Consider the human body: each cell and organ is fantastically different in form and function, yet each is necessary for the body to exist and thrive. Calling every Airman a warrior is the equivalent to naming each organ of the body an "eye" or an "ear," as if the sense of sight or sound is the most important function of the body. One would never call a hand an eye, for this would be intellectually dishonest and raise the level of importance of the eye over the hand. The Air Force must proceed in the same manner. The significance of each specialty within the Air Force to the completion of the mission must be emphasized, but this is not accomplished through the illogical assertion that every Airman is a warrior.

Being a warrior is more than just an oath. It is not that simple; nor should the term "warrior" be so diluted merely to assuage feelings or promote a false sense of self-esteem. Fear and danger are ever-present realities, and courage is the overriding requirement for the warrior. The "warrior is not a man who is unfamiliar with fear… the

warrior is the man who overcomes his fear."[17] The warriors throughout history bravely paved an extraordinary and powerful path for those who follow in their footsteps. The label of the "warrior" is not about the level of importance of the job—it is the job.

Why it Matters: Within the Air Force

In correcting its definition of the warrior, the Air Force overcomes the innate need to placate feelings of individual and institutional insecurity and subsequently embraces truthfulness and candor. Consequently, the Air Force enables a greater internal conviction of what the Air Force is as an armed force and what it brings to the joint fight—an innovative, technological force with capabilities that are unmatched by any other military service in the world.

One commentator argued that since the state sanctions the military member to kill for the purposes of the state regardless of distance, both physical and emotional, from the enemy, that this renders the argument of who is a warrior spurious.[18] This leads to the contention that the warrior and the operator are one and the same as each is merely a state-sanctioned killer despite the diametrically opposed contexts in which the operator and warrior perform their state-sanctioned task. Subsequently, debating who is or is not a warrior only tends to alienate those who do not fall into the traditional warrior mold of accepting personal danger and individual risk and closing with the enemy.[19]

This contention not only perpetuates the continued insecurity of the Air Force but also ignores the significance, and preeminence, of the moral forces in war. This is the essential difference between the operator and the warrior. The operator engages the enemy without having to fear any reprisal, death, injury, or capture. The engagement, including any associated killing, is physically easy, though mentally challenging. The operator follows a certain checklist, ensures all legalities are met, and presses a button or turns a key. No danger, no risk, no fear—no problem. The warriors, on the other hand, place themselves at physical risk, willingly facing fear and danger. The warrior needs to

[17] Christopher Coker, *The Warrior Ethos: Military Culture and the War on Terror*, Routledge: New York, 2007, 129.
[18] Lt Col James Dawkins, Jr., *Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles: Examining the Political, Moral, and Social Implications*, School of Advanced Air and Space Studies, Maxwell AFB, AL, 2005.
[19] Dawkins, *Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles*, 40-45.

balance fear with morale in order to act and succeed; the operator needs only balance legality with morale to soothe any moral compunction.

In addition, the operator and the warrior perform a great many functions beyond killing the enemy. To reduce either to merely a state-sanctioned killer denies the flexibility of both thought and action the operator and warrior provide. Operators offer innumerable functions beyond killing, for example cyber and ISR operations. Moreover, the warrior not only kills, but also can capture, detain, show compassion and restraint, and find alternate ways to complete the mission.

The further contention that the Air Force must not declare one group to be warriors and the other operators because doing so would create wounded feelings is a feeble excuse to equate the two. It is clear the two are separate and distinct. In addition, the Air Force is so beholden to raising the esteem and professional identity of all Airmen that it puts forth a wholly unbelievable and intellectually dishonest concept that all Airmen are warriors.

Some may argue that the Air Force should entirely abandon the term "warrior" and just acknowledge that its main purpose is the high-tech application of force. Noting the relatively small number of Airmen who meet the definition of the warrior, they may claim that both the term and concept are largely irrelevant to what the Air Force does and what it most likely will do in the future. Such an argument is the antithesis to the current Air Force rhetoric, yet it unwittingly fails for the same reason the current Air Force argument falls short: both extremes are emotional arguments aimed primarily to mollify feelings of inferiority and insecurity in the individual Airman. Despite the fact the Air Force has a relatively small remnant of warriors, this is no reason to deny the very existence of such Airmen. All Airmen should be recognized and honored for their particular contribution to the Air Force's immense capabilities, whether they are warriors, operators, managers, technologists, etc. Rather than swinging the pendulum to the opposite extreme, the Air Force should seek and espouse the plumb line truth.

In this respect, the Air Force should take a lesson from the Navy, the other service that relies heavily on technology to fulfill its missions. Taking a close look at the Sailor's Creed of the US Navy (intro, page 4), the word "warrior" does not appear in the text. It is clear throughout the Sailor's Creed that the emphasis is on a code of ethical conduct for

each sailor and the pride that each has in being a part of the Navy team; "I proudly serve my country's Navy combat team with Honor, Courage and Commitment."[20] The complementary Navy Ethos, formerly named "warrior ethos," reinforces the idea that it is being a part of the Navy that one should take pride in, not in the position one holds within the Navy. No one would deny warriors exist within the Navy; their history testifies to the fact. It is clear the Navy is secure in its identity and in what it brings to the joint fight.

The Air Force, in its short history as a service, has a great deal to take pride in. All Airmen must learn about and understand the accomplishments and traditions of the Air Force, and how the Air Force brings innovative technologies and unique capabilities to positively affect today's security environment and shape the conflicts of tomorrow. Being a part of this legacy is what the Airman should take pride and be secure in, not some fraudulent notion that each Airman is a warrior in line with the great traditions of the past. The Air Force Airman is emotionally sturdy enough and has the requisite level of self-esteem that the intellectually dishonest statement that "every Airman is a warrior" should be abandoned.

The Air Force, as well as the other armed services to a greater or lesser extent, strives to keep most of its members as far from the front lines as possible in relative safety, using technology to perform most of its tasks and missions. Rather than shrinking from this fact, the Air Force should embrace its technological savvy. To promulgate the idea that all Airmen are warriors is neither believable nor true.

Why it Matters: Outside the Air Force

The main reason the Air Force should step back from its declaration that all Airmen are warriors and move to a more honest assessment of what it does as a service comes down to one word—credibility. The Air Force's rather sterile methods of waging war, often at great distances using advanced technology, contradict the traditional warrior archetype. While the Army and Marines still must focus on closing with the enemy and fighting in rather close order, the Air Force is able to fight from afar. Claiming all Airmen are warriors gives the appearance of sanctifying and legitimizing acts that—at

[20] Official Website of the United States Navy, *The Sailor's Creed*, http://www.navy.mil/navydata/navy_legacy_hr.asp?id=257, (accessed Dec 7, 2009).

least from the perspective of combatants on the ground—have little to do with being a warrior.[21]

Since the early history of flight, soldiers in the field ridiculed the pilot for leading a more cavalier lifestyle away from the pain and drudgery of the frontlines. The perception was the pilot flew in relative safety over the field of battle only to return to a secure airfield, well behind the front, ate hot food, took a warm shower, and enjoyed the local establishments. This golden-boy mystique contrasted sharply with the dangers and drudgery of the front lines. Still, what is not often recognized is that while their exposure to danger may be shorter in duration and over greater distances, physical danger and peril were still present.[22]

Over the years, the Air Force created additional career fields that exposed Airmen to danger on the field of battle, such as JTACs, PJs, and several varieties of Air Force Special Forces. During the same time, however, the Air Force developed technologies that separated, and in some cases completely removed, the operators from the battlefield. The technologies and budgets of the future will likely increase the number of unmanned systems operated by the Air Force. This separation from the battlefield and subsequent removal of any physical risk to the operator create a discontinuity with the sister services whose warriors still face physical danger on the battlefield. Subsequently, this discontinuity creates a lack of shared experiences, and therefore a lack of credibility.

As an example, P.W. Singer offers the story of a special operations officer just back from Iraq. The officer talks about RPA operators and how disconnected they are from the enemy. Emphasizing the lack of warrior credentials of the RPA operator, the officer states, "A warrior has to assume physical risk." When asked if the RPA pilot was at war, the officer replies, "No, he doesn't meet my definition."[23] The sister services, particularly the Army and the Marines, view the exposure to risk as a key characteristic of the warrior, even applying the same standard to the enemy. Courage in the face of danger will always define the true warrior.[24]

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[21] Robert Heckler, *In Search of the Warrior Spirit*, California: North Atlantic Books, 1990, 108-111.
[22] P.W. Singer, *Wired for War: The Robotics Revolution and Conflict in the 21st Century*, The Penguin Press: New York, 2009, 330.
[23] Singer, *Wired for War*, 330-331.
[24] Singer, *Wired for War*, 331-332.

A second example is provided in which a different special operations officer in Afghanistan was left without RPA coverage because of bad weather, leaving his team without air coverage while deep inside enemy territory. Despite clear skies at the time, the winds at altitude may have been out of limits or inclement weather may have been approaching, but to the warriors on the ground, the RPA operators weren't just taking less risk, but no risk at all. Hence, the Air Force appears to value its machines more then men on the ground. Most importantly, the soldier on the ground does not perceive that the RPA operators grasp the dangers and fears that the man on the ground faces, and therefore the RPA operator is not a warrior.[25]

The differing methods of warfare create a definitive lack of shared experiences. This imbalance of shared experiences leads to a lack of credibility when the Air Force claims every Airman is a warrior, and feelings of indignation in the claim that being a warrior is only a condition of the heart. For those who face fear and danger on the front lines, who advance on the enemy in house-to-house searches, who wonder if their next step on the field of battle is into an ambush, who leaped off the amphibious landing ships on the beaches of Iwo Jima, or who lurked quietly beneath the surface in submarines awaiting the next depth charge, all true warriors of the past would most certainly assert that being a warrior is more than just a condition of the heart.

The Air Force must avoid the trap of trying to declare it is a warrior force in the same vein as the sister services. The Air Force is fundamentally different, as its founders knew it to be. The Air Force brings technology and fires to the field of battle in such a way that no other service, or any other air force, can. The credibility of the Air Force would increase if it would acknowledge this simple truth and take pride in what it does provide to the joint fight. Claiming that all Airmen are warriors undermines the Air Force's credibility and distracts from its real, essential contribution to modern warfare.

Overall Impact

The greatest impact upon the Air Force of reorienting the definition of the warrior would be institutional credibility. Stepping back from the misguided need to imbue warrior status on every Airman would help eliminate any integrity barrier between the

[25] Singer, *Wired for War*, 336-337.

services. Therefore, the Air Force should exhibit pride and comfort in what it is—the world's preeminent air, space, and cyberspace power—and not in what it isn't—a force in which every member is a warrior.

In current practice, the institution attempts to create pride in Airmen through the designation of warrior status and its codification in the Airman's Creed.[26] This pride is both a forgery and misplaced. An Airmans' self-esteem and dignity should come from serving with honor in his or her respective specialty, not through seeking or obtaining an inappropriate designation of a warrior.

Integrity is a core value of the Air Force; therefore, integrity must be integral to the individual Airman. AFDD 1-1 states integrity is "the single most important part of character,…[integrity] makes Airmen who they are and what they stand for as much a part of their professional reputation as their ability to fly or fix jets, run the computer network, repair the runway, or defend the airbase," and encompasses the characteristics of honesty, self-respect, and humility.[27] Individual integrity builds, among other characteristics, trust, honor, and credibility both internally and externally to the institution. With increasing institutional credibility comes a subsequent rise in institutional power. Honest brokers are esteemed; those who seek to be something they are not are pushed aside as counterfeits and frauds. This applies on both the personal and institutional level.

If the Air Force is to hold true to its codified doctrine and enunciated core values, it must disassociate itself from its adherence to an intellectually dishonest notion that all Airmen are warriors simply through the taking of an oath. The current Air Force argument fails historically, traditionally, rationally, and analytically. To create a force that seeks to subscribe to a warrior ethos is admirable and necessary; however, declaring *every* Airman is a warrior for merely taking an oath attempts only to raise the self-esteem of the non-warrior Airman under false pretenses and veiled flattery. Therefore, while every Airman must adhere to a warrior ethos, it is clear that not every Airman is a warrior.

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[26] SrA Troy Davis, "CMSAF Introduces, Defines Warrior Ethos," Air Force News Agency, 10 April 2007, found at http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123048232, (accessed 7 Dec 2009).
[27] AFDD 1-1, *Leadership and Force Development*, 5.

Conclusion

Self-importance is our greatest enemy. Think about it - what weakens us is feeling offended by the deeds and misdeeds of our fellowmen. Our self-importance requires that we spend most of our lives offended by someone.

- Carlos Castaneda

All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident.

- Arthur Schopenhauer

The warrior's gift is to willingly storm Hell that Heaven may remain unstained.

- R.V.A. Marcell

The qualities and characteristics that form the warrior have been studied and examined by historians and theorists alike. Carl von Clausewitz states, "War is the realm of physical exertion and suffering. These will destroy us unless we can make ourselves indifferent to them, and for this birth or training must provide us with a certain strength of body and soul."[1] In a few short sentences, Clausewitz seizes upon the very essence of what makes a warrior: the combination and strength of both body and soul. Although any individual can exercise to become physically capable of performing arduous tasks, only the warrior has the cumulative burden of both exertion and danger to the body, mixed with the moral implications to the soul.

Through a historical lens, the impact of technology upon the time-honored perception of the warrior is dramatic. Technology's main purpose for the warrior is to increase the chances for personal survival while simultaneously maximizing destructive effectiveness and efficiency. The United States is particularly adept at trying to remove the service member from the scene of battle and its subsequent physical and moral ramifications. In order to create the impression of a more humane form of warfare, technology generates the expectation of reduced friendly casualties, minimization of collateral damage, and the reduction or elimination of other negative aspects of warfare.

[1] Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War,* trans. and ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984, 101.

In turn, technology also provides the means to eliminate such existential factors of courage, fear, danger, and remorse.[2] Despite the greater accuracy and more focused application of violence technology provides, war is, and always will be, a quintessentially human endeavor—one that cannot have either human emotion or the moral factors of war divorced from its grammar.

Technological advancements create an imperative for the warrior ethos. Separated from the scene of carnage and removed from danger, the ability to inflict great harm and destruction at the mere touch of a button is unparalleled. The psychological costs of technological warfare and killing from a distance are only beginning to be understood.[3] The degree of ethical fortitude and moral restraint that is required for engaging in modern warfare will only increase as fewer Airmen will be required to expose themselves to danger while simultaneously wielding devastating power from afar.

Garnering the courage to overcome fear of physical injury or death at the hands of the enemy is not the primary task or function of an overwhelming majority of Air Force Airmen, yet it is the essential element of being a warrior. To reduce the qualification of a warrior to a few moments in time to recite an oath, despite how heartfelt and momentous the oath is to each Airman, is disingenuous and trite. To protect its institutional credibility and integrity, the Air Force should jettison the inaccurate claim that all Airmen are warriors, for indeed they are not.

Recommendations

The Air Force should continue to inculcate the warrior ethos into each Airman and to educate all Airmen on the importance of every specialty rather than the false notion that each Airman is a warrior. To that end, some basic changes to AFDD 1-1, the Airman's Creed, and the curriculum for both the enlisted and officer force should occur.

As AFDD 1-1 is the foundational document that provides "*the* Air Force statement of leadership principles and force development," this is where the first change

[2] Christopher Coker, *The Warrior Ethos: Military Culture and the War on Terror*, Routledge: New York, 2007, 114.

[3] Lt Col Dave Grossman, *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society*, Little, Brown and Company: New York, 1995, 43-93, 99-110, 156-170, 231-240. Lt Col Grossman provides an outstanding area of studies and in-depth analysis, as well as first-hand accounts, throughout his work that provide a glimpse into the psychological costs of technologically advanced warfare.

should take place.[4] The suggested change to this document is minor. The heart of the document is sound, requiring only the replacement of the opening quote from General Jumper with a more appropriate quote. Rather than claiming the "entire force is a warrior force" and that being a warrior is only a "condition of the heart," a more appropriate quote for the Air Force's primary leadership publication would encapsulate characteristics needed for effective leadership.[5] Former Chief of Staff General Fogleman provides an outstanding quote on leadership, found on the subsequent page of AFDD 1-1, which would aptly replace General Jumper's quote. The quote by Fogleman states, "Good leaders are people who have a passion to succeed…To become successful leaders, we must first learn that no matter how good the technology or how shiny the equipment, people-to-people relations get things done in our organizations. People are the assets that determine our success or failure. If you are to be a good leader, you have to cultivate your skills in the arena of personal relations."[6]

Next, the Air Force should modify the curriculum of Basic Military Training, each of the commissioning sources, as well as the Air and Space Basic Course, in addition to any other Air Force curriculum that espouses the "all Airmen are warriors" dogma. This current line of teaching only serves to reinforce the misperception of the warrior status of each Airman, primarily in the hope that this easily acquired warrior status will build a foundation of self-esteem and self-worth in all Airmen. This foundation is poorly laid in unstable linguistic, but psychologically appealing, sand. Rather, eliminating references to "all Airmen are warriors" and replacing it with a greater emphasis on the collective teamwork required of all Airmen in order to accomplish the mission provides a solid groundwork of honesty, integrity, and truthfulness in which all Airmen can take pride.

Expanding the curriculum's historic aperture to include personal examples from varying specialties, including the warrior and non-warrior Airman alike, fosters a greater appreciation for all Airmen regardless of primary function. For example, in addition to the warrior narratives, including information on the importance of maintenance would complement the core curriculum. This can be displayed through the examination of

[4] Air Force Doctrine Document 1-1, *Leadership and Force Development*, 18 Feb 2006, iii.
[5] AFDD 1-1, *Leadership and Force Development*, 1.
[6] AFDD 1-1, *Leadership and Force Development*, 2.

sortie generation, aircraft availability statistics, the manner in which maintainers adapted to new technology, and descriptions of the harsh environmental and operational conditions many worked under to produce combat-ready aircraft. Furthermore, the significance of Airmen who gather and analyze intelligence can be easily unearthed from air operations dating as far back as World War I through the current operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Similarly, the enormous effort of the Berlin Airlift illuminates the vital Airmen in charge of logistics and air traffic control. Even the decision to launch the allied invasion on D-day during World War II, and current air operations throughout the history of flight, hinged on the accuracy of those providing weather forecasts.

Finally, slight changes in the Airman's Creed would alleviate the faulty impression that all Airmen are warriors while still imparting the authoritative and guiding set of convictions the Airman's Creed provides. The recommended changes are few, but alter it in such a way as to increase its credibility, honesty, and integrity.

The Airman's Creed	**A Revised Airman's Creed**
I am an American Airman. I am a Warrior. I have answered my Nation's call.	I am an American Airman. *I possess a Warrior Ethos.* I have answered my Nation's call.
I am an American Airman. My mission is to Fly, Fight, and Win. I am faithful to a Proud Heritage, A Tradition of Honor, And a Legacy of Valor.	I am an American Airman. *Our* mission is to Fly, Fight, and Win. I am faithful to a Proud Heritage, A Tradition of Honor, And a Legacy of Valor.
I am an American Airman. Guardian of Freedom and Justice, My Nation's Sword and Shield, Its Sentry and Avenger. I defend my Country with my Life.	I am an American Airman. Guardian of Freedom and Justice, My Nation's Sword and Shield, Its Sentry and Avenger. I defend my Country with my Life.
I am an American Airman. Wingman, Leader, Warrior. I will never leave an Airman behind, I will never falter, And I will not fail.	I am an American Airman. *Trusted Wingman, Innovative Leader.* I will never leave an Airman behind, I will never falter, And I will not fail.

Through these simple modifications, the Air Force can enhance the veracity of the Creed. Namely, the incorrect mantra that every Airman is a warrior should be replaced by the correct assertion, and institutional desire, that each Airman must ascribe to a warrior ethos. In addition, altering the false notion that each individual's mission is to fly, fight, and win improves the Creed. In its place, the more team-oriented word "our" is used; stressing the importance of the synthesis of Air Force specialties in order to successfully complete its assigned missions. The final modification once again replaces the faulty warrior label with a greater refinement of the qualities of Air Force wingmen and leaders.

By correcting AFDD 1-1, remedying the current curricula to convey the necessity of each Airman while eliminating the misnomer that all Airmen are warriors, and incorporating accuracy into a slightly modified Airman's Creed, the Air Force establishes a firm underpinning for every Airman to fully grasp the depth and breadth of services the Air Force provides and relies upon. This foundation fosters institutional credibility and pride and further generates individual confidence and esteem in being an Airman in the world's most dominant air power. For the Air Force to diminish the qualities and characteristics of the warrior to a mere recitation of words while many in the Air Force and the sister services alike continue to risk life and limb, and deal with the moral implications of killing, creates an institutional aura of emotional featherweights. Shedding erroneous rhetoric that every Airman is a warrior and embracing both intellectual and analytical honesty will serve as a foundation to enhancing institutional credibility, and thus increase both institutional pride and power.

Rebuild the Fortress

Sensibilities and egos are fickle things. They are easily bruised and battered. Therefore, individuals and institutions create methods and means to generate self-esteem and worth to shield against persistent attacks. Just as with the castles and forts of the past, the best means of protection are solid walls properly constructed upon a firm and lasting foundation. The current Air Force bedrock is shifting sand and the walls of institutional credibility and esteem are readily penetrated, as the recent joke told by General Petraeus, and its subsequent reaction, confirm.

To reinforce the institutional walls and shore up the base, the Air Force must seek credibility and integrity throughout the institution, to include how it educates and instills pride in its Airmen. Applying a thin veneer of hyperbolized warrior rhetoric provides only a temporary, but permeable, patch to the holes in the walls of the sense of worth of the individual Airman, and only serves to erode institutional credibility. To service members, honesty must be "the foundation of trust and the hallmark of the profession of arms."[7] The honest appraisal of who is an Air Force warrior affirms that although every Airman plays a vital role, not every Airman is a warrior. If the truth injures sensibilities, then the walls that protect both the institution and the individual are too thin and stand upon a weak, unstable foundation. They must be rebuilt. It is high time the Air Force reconstruct the fortress walls on the bedrock of truth, reinforced with honesty.

[7] AFDD 1-1, *Leadership and Force Development*, 5.

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